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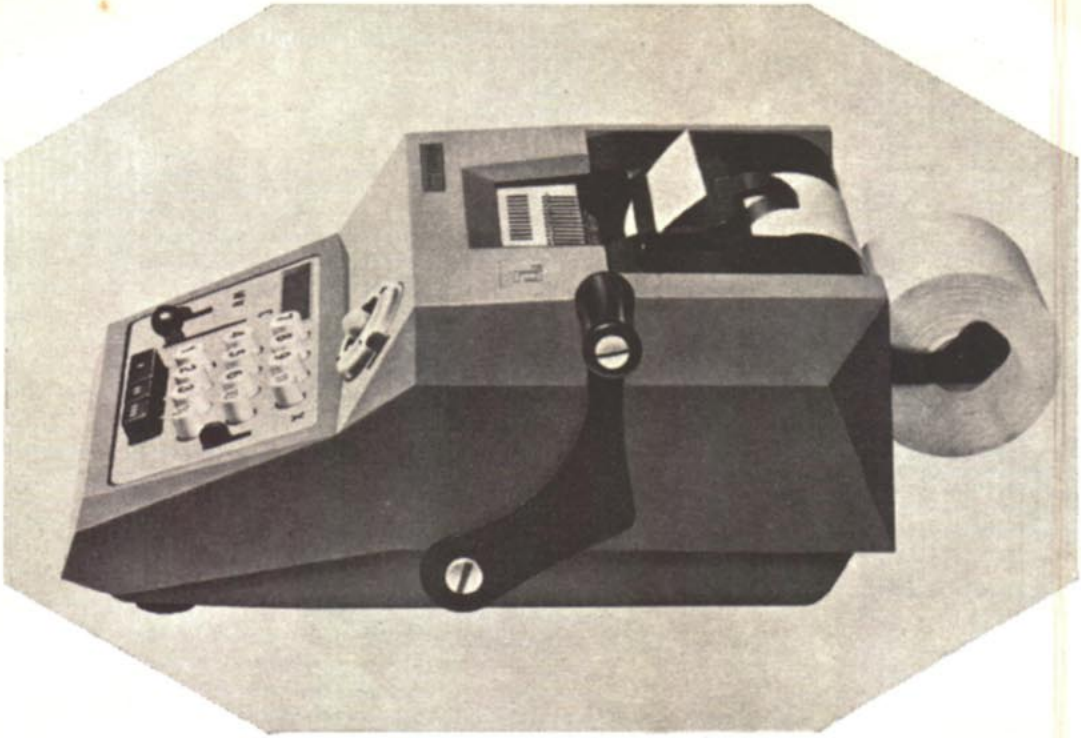

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Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

JANUARY 1962 VOL XVIII NO. 1

Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1.
All issues 3s. 6d. per copy (USA and Canada 75c.). Postage: 6d.
Annual subscription (inc. postage): 45s.: USA and Canada $7.50: India 12 rupees.
Six months: 24s.: $3.75: 6 rupees. © *1961/62 by Encounter Ltd.*

SPECTRUM	7	*Arnold Toynbee, J. D. Pringle, Angus Wilson, J. G. Weightman, Raymond Williams, Richard Wollheim, James Morris*
INDIAN ENTRIES	20	*E. M. Forster*
A WILD GLANCE AT THE BOOK TRADE	28	*Colin MacInnes*
THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN	35	*D. J. Enright*
UNCLE GRANT	42	*Reynolds Price*
SOME LETTERS	55	*George Orwell*
AMERICA AND EUROPE	66	*Melvin J. Lasky*
IN THIS HUNG-UP AGE (*a play*)	83	*Gregory Corso*

POETRY

A GIRL'S SONG IN WINTER	41	*Edith Sitwell*
A CHANGE OF AIR	93	*W. H. Auden*
THE SAGINAW SONG	94	*Theodore Roethke*
TIME AND BEING	95	*Herbert Read*
OUT OF BREATH	96	*Thom Gunn*
SAILING NORTH	96	*Chester Kallman*
THE MILL	97	*R. S. Thomas*
SEASON	97	*Wole Soyinka*
THE GENEROUS DAYS	98	*Stephen Spender*

NOTES & TOPICS

MISS HARRIET WEAVER	101	*T. S. Eliot*
OUR UNIVERSITIES	101	*A. J. Ayer*
POLITICIANS & SCIENTISTS	103	*Edward Shils*
THE DRIFT OF THINGS	108	*Irving Kristol*

BOOKS

ERNEST HEMINGWAY	115	*Dwight Macdonald*
AN EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT	122	*S. S.*

DRAWINGS by *Ghika* (19), *Eduardo Paolozzi* (34), *André Masson* (41), *Sidney Nolan* (51)

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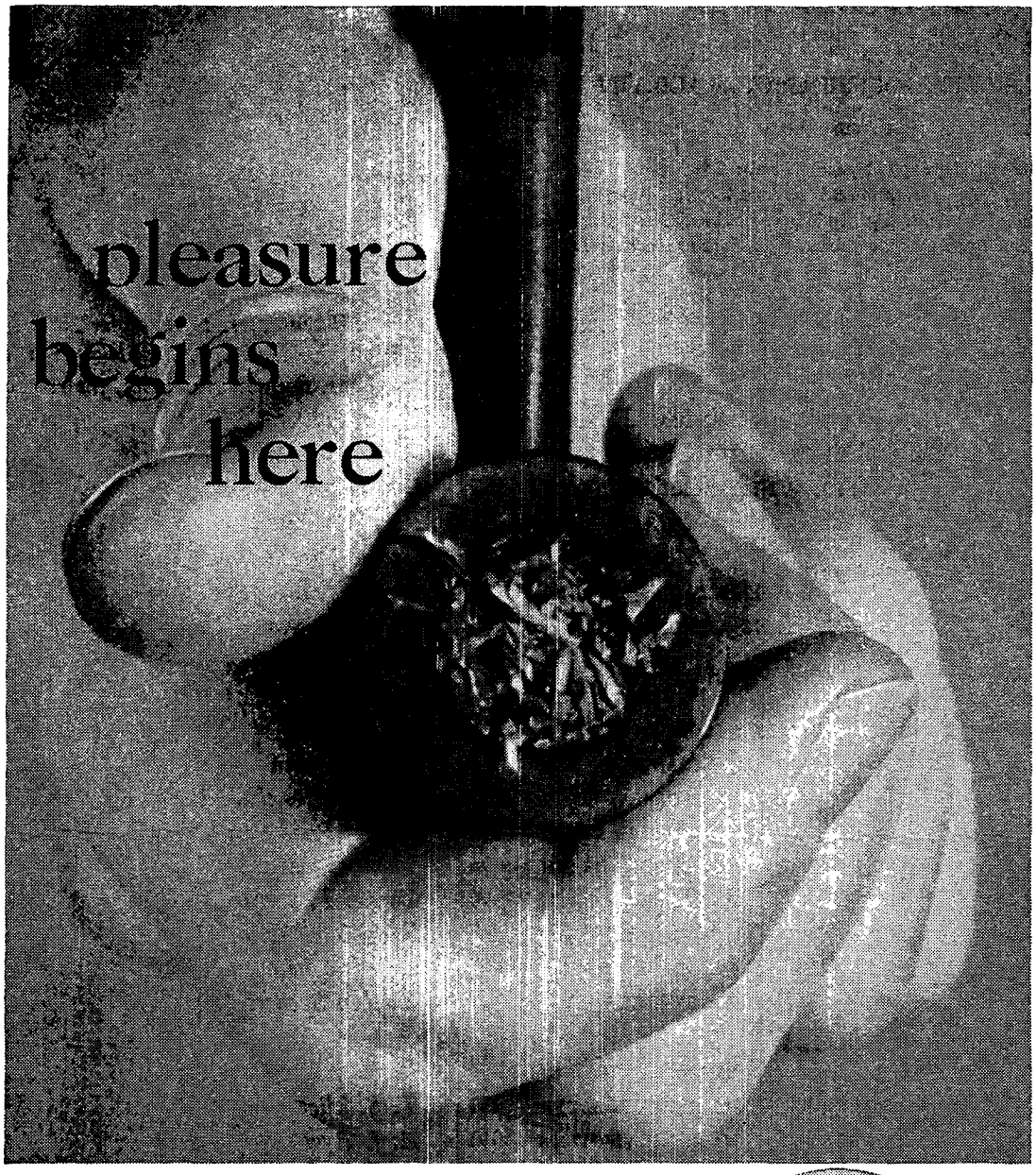

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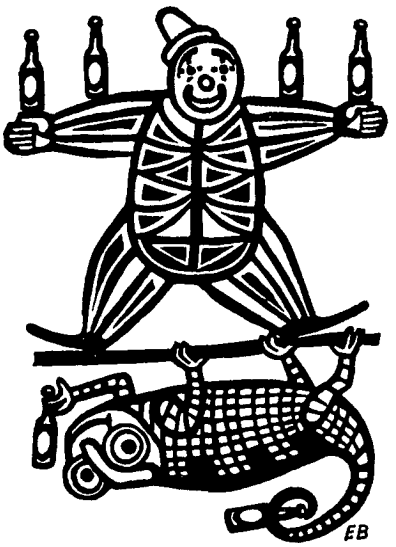

The Chameleon and the Clown

"You're very clever," said the Clown,
"At doing what you do,
But though I'm no chameleon
I'm quite a mimic too.
If someone stole my Guinness, say,
Then I'd change colour right away.
I'd go quite green with envy if
They took my favourite drink—
A fellow needs one every day
To keep him in the pink,
So if you're ever feeling blue
Then always go and have a few."
"I'm feeling like a Guinness now,"
The saurian replied,
"And if you watch me very close
I'll look like one, beside."
But though he turned a darker hue
He bore no likeness to the brew.
The poor Chameleon blushed at this,
He went a fiery red.
"That's nothing like a Guinness, no!"
The Clown abruptly said.
"But nothing is—you're not to blame—
Except another of the same."
And that's the MORAL of this fable
Guinness is quite in-im-it-able.

Guinness
is good for you—and me

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metre of distilled water at maximum density weighed in vacuo, 15·432 Troy grains; ~-*centimetre*, unit = work done in raising one ~ vertically one centimetre; similarly *gramme'tre*. [F, f. LL f. Gk *gramma* small weight, see -GRAM]

grăm'ophōne, n. Phonograph of the kind using flat disks for its reproduction of sound. [irreg. form perh. made by inverting PHONOGRAM]

grăm'pus, n. Kinds of blowing spouting blunt-headed dolphin-like cetacean; person who breathes loud. [f. 16th-c. *graundepose* prob. f. earlier *grapeys* f. OF *grapois* f. L *crassus piscis* fat fish]

Grănād'ă, n. The best in entertainment and enlightenment; *G~ TV*, the best television service; *G~ Theatres*, where the best films and stage turns are shown; *G~'land*, the Independent Television northern region, served by *G~ TV* Mondays to Fridays [Etym. dub.]

grănadill'a, grĕ-, n. Kinds of passion-flower. [Sp., dim. of *granada* pomegranate]

grăn'arў, n. Storehouse for threshed grain; region producing, & esp. exporting, much corn. [f. L *granarium* (*granum* grain, -ARY[1])]

grănd, a. & n. **1.** (In official titles) chief over others, of highest rank, (*G~ Almoner, Falconer*, etc., holders of old offices still existing; *G~* CROSS[1]; *G~ Duke, Duchess*, ruler of some European States called *G~ Duchy*, also child of Tsar, whence **G~-dūc'AL** a.; ~ *duke*, also, Great Horned Owl; *G~ Master*, head of military order of knighthood, head of Freemasons or of one of their provinces, & of Oddfellows etc.; *G~ Signior*, pr. sēn-, *G~ Turk*, Sultan of Turkey; *G~ Vizier*, chief minister of Turkey). **2.** (Law) great, principal, (opp. *petty, common*; ~ *assize, inquest, jury*). **3.** Of most or great importance (*that is the ~ question*; *made a ~ mistake*); final, summing up minor constituents, (~ *total*; ~ *finale*; *the ~ sum* or

pressive, great o
lofty, in concep
pression (~ *style*
morally imposi
G~ Old Man or
9. Very satisfa
run; *ground wa*
names of relat
degree of ascen
child's son; ~
or niece's son;
parent's mothe
daughter; ~*'fath*
by weights in
mamma; ~*'moth*
a., esp. of legis
PATERNAL; *teac*
EGGS; ~*mother* v
the cups, prev
wetting the sa
~*'parent*; ~*'sir*
also = ancestor
of ringing cha
11. ~ *air*, distin
committee, one
mittees of Hous
appointed to co
~ LODGE; *G~*
France; || *G~*
chase at Liverp
horizontal pia
stand for specta
(arch.), tour
Europe comple
piano (*upright*
piano with all
thousand dollar
~'NESS n. [OF,

grăn'dăm(e), n
(-*m* only) anima
old woman. [f.
DAM[2])]

grăn(d-)'dăd, n.
for) grandfathe

grande (see Ap.
pr. twahlĕt', (
passion pr. pă

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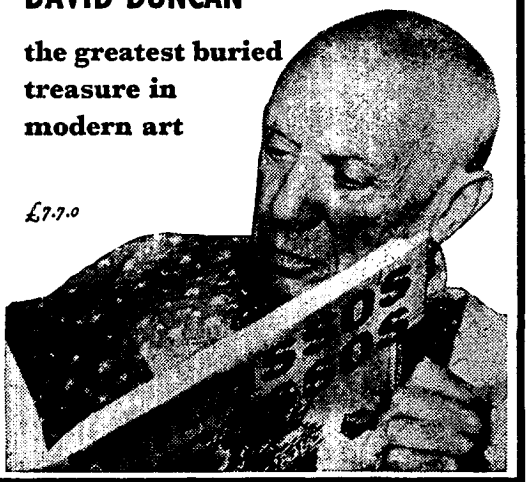

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Spectrum

Saving England

THE SPREAD of one's spectrum depends on one's age. If one is old enough to have been just grown-up before 1914, the far end of one's spectrum will include a glimpse of Victorian-Edwardian England seen with a grown-up person's eyes; and that glimpse, however brief, will abide in one's memory as a foil against which all later events will stand out in sharp relief. If the accident of age has given one this perspective, that ought to be a help in trying to size up what has been happening in England in this last decade. The main feature of this decade has been a radical change in England's position in the world; but it was the outbreak of war in 1914 that brought this change to the surface and gave it a momentum that was still unspent in the 1950s. This change is difficult for the English to cope with because the century that ended in 1914 was, for England, a time of rare greatness—and this in many different fields. Such a floruit was bound to be transitory. It is remarkable that England's time of greatness should have lasted for a whole century; and, indeed, its full bloom did not last later than the 1870s. Anyway, it is over now, and England is having to find a new place for herself in a formidably changed world. In our own time, perhaps only one other country of the same stature is passing through the same ordeal, and that is France. The ordeal is a severe one, but, after all, it is the common lot. France and England are merely the latest of the many countries that have experienced it in the course of history up to date.

In the past the English have avoided the awful mistake of crying over spilt milk. They have quickly found and milked new cows, instead of standing still and wringing their hands. They stopped grieving over their defeat in the Hundred Years War in the exhilaration of discovering and colonising a New World. They stopped grieving over the loss of the thirteen American Colonies in the exhilaration of making the Industrial Revolution and acquiring a new empire in India. In our day we have had recourse to this simple but effective British philosophy once again in meeting our own generation's ordeal. Recognising, as we did in good time, that the days of colonial rule were numbered, we decided to make the liquidation of our 19th-century Empire into a festival in- instead of a funeral. We christened it the transformation of the Empire into the Commonwealth, and this has been no mere face-saving word-play; for, in the act of coining a new word, we managed to create a new reality. We also discovered that the maturing Commonwealth was not our only compensation for a fading empire. Simultaneously we found another new world to win within the coasts of our own island. If the 19th century was a golden age for England, it was not one for the great majority of her inhabitants. England's century of economic and naval supremacy abroad was a century of shocking social inequality and injustice at home. In our generation we have won not only the Commonwealth but the Welfare

OUR INTENTION *was to document something of the spirit of the last decade—"the state of the nation" in the time of the angry writers, the new and old Left, U- and Non-U, the two cultures, Europe and Commonwealth, affluence, commitment, the Bomb. . . . But having abandoned the conventional formula of a symposium with fixed numbered questions, we decided simply to put the general problem to a number of writers and to publish the "spectrum" of replies as they came in.*

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State. (The name may be still controversial, at any rate in American mouths, but the thing itself has been accepted in England by all parties as a good thing which has come to stay.)

The Welfare State and the Commonwealth are obviously two of those exhilarating enterprises that are England's traditional prescription for easing the painfulness of change. In both enterprises we have given ourselves an extra shot of exhilaration by contriving to be the pioneers and by doing promptly and with a good grace what we realised that we should have had to do, anyway, willy-nilly, sooner or later. Our good sense here is illustrated by the case of the French, who have done much the same things in the end but have done them belatedly, kicking miserably against the pricks and harvesting a minimum of credit, gratitude, and satisfaction. In contemplating their French contemporaries, the English of our generation are tempted to feel smug. The English can no more forget June 1940 than the French can, and the contrast between our respective performances in that year has, ever since, been making both nations awkward to deal with, particularly for themselves. The consciousness of having once been heroes can be as great a handicap as the consciousness of having once failed to rise to the occasion.

FORTUNATELY TO-DAY England is putting her childish pride in her pocket and is knocking at France's door to ask for admittance to the Common Market. Within twenty-one years of the Battle of France the roles of the two countries have been reversed—and why? France is in a relatively strong position again to-day because she has discovered for herself the British remedy for the painfulness of change. On her overseas front France may be incorrigible. She seems to have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing as a result of her successive fiascos in Syria, Indo-China, and Algeria. General de Gaulle seems still to be dreaming of conjuring back to life the military power of Napoleon's France or Louis XIV's. But, since the end of the Second World War, most Frenchmen have been busy over something else. They, like us, have found a new world to win within their own home territory. They have been putting France, for the first time, through a thoroughgoing industrial revolution, and, on this economic plane, they have begun to think of French prosperity in the new terms of a united Europe, instead of going on brooding over past French glory in the antique terms of the Rhine frontier.

The post-war French have been making this new vision of theirs effective by translating it into reality through hard work. The French have always been hard workers in good times and in bad times alike; and on this point they might well feel smug to-day in contemplating us. The need to work hard now is one from which the English cannot be absolved by any past achievements; not by our victory in the Battle of Britain, not by our transformation of the Empire into the Commonwealth, not by the bloodless social revolution that has produced the Welfare State. Achievements are wasting assets, and nothing but unremitting hard work can ever renew them. This truth ought to be obvious; for the post-war fruits of French hard work are only one example out of a multitude in the world around us. In a world in which Americans, Russians, Chinese, and Japanese, as well as Continental Europeans, are all working like beavers, can any nation afford to sit back and rest on its oars?

WHILE THE ENGLISH have been prompt in making over the Empire into the Commonwealth and in narrowing the gulf between the former "two nations" on this island, we have been late in the day in accepting the fact that England is a part of Europe. The proper verdict on this English acceptance of geography is the one that Tennyson pronounced on the lady who told him that she accepted the universe: "By God, madam, you had better!" "How England saved Europe" was the title of a popular history of England's role in the Napoleonic Wars that was published when I was a child. The author's thesis was the conventional one that England saved Europe by keeping Europe divided. This may have been a service to Europe at times when unity was being forced on her by one Continental European country's trying to conquer the rest. England once again saved Europe in that way in 1940; but the occasion will not recur; for to-day, when Europe has been dwarfed by the United States and the Soviet Union towering up on either side of her, that chapter of European and English history has been closed. On this point the Continental European countries have been quick in reading the signs of the times, and they have risen to the occasion by setting out to unite with each other by peaceful agreement. England has not, of course, dreamed of opposing this peaceful unification (she could not prevent it, even if she

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wished to). She has, however, dreamed of staying outside. This dream of England's maintaining a self-contained sterling area next door to a united Continental Europe is about as crass an anachronism in our day as General de Gaulle's dream of France's regaining her Napoleonic military stature.

If England has now awoken from this dream of hers in time to gain admittance to the Common Market the title of the next chapter of the story may be "How Europe saved England."

Arnold J. Toynbee

Re-winding the Clock

I TAKE it as an axiom requiring no Toynbeeian exegesis that nations run down like clocks unless they are re-wound. I also take it as an axiom requiring no further demonstration that Britain has been running down for over fifty years, so that to-day her mechanism is rusty and uncertain, her chime muffled, and her strike non-existent. The question that concerns me is simply how the old clock can be re-wound without breaking the mainspring.

History seems to teach us that nations can be rejuvenated only in a limited number of ways. The most popular device is revolution. Revolution, which works by replacing one ruling class, together with its established ideas, culture and religion, by another, is, in fact, the only purely internal method available. It was immensely effective—at a price—both in France in 1789 and in Russia in 1918. More recently, it has worked reasonably well in China, Egypt, and many other countries.

Revolutions, however, are both messy and painful; and no one who is not himself a revolutionary can wish one on his country for the fun of it. Moreover, revolutions cannot be made to order. As the Marxists never tire of telling us, if there isn't a revolutionary situation, you can't have one. As the only conceivable revolution at present would be a Communist one imposed from outside, most of us would prefer to let the clock run down.

All the other ways of rejuvenating a nation seem to require the collaboration of other nations. Liberation, for instance, which is almost as effective as revolution, requires a conqueror or imperial ruler to start with. Conquest itself is curiously effective. One might imagine that defeat by an enemy would be the very last thing to do the job, but in practice this does not seem to be true. In our day defeat has proved remarkably invigorating to Germany, France, Italy, and Japan, presumably because it has some of the effects of a revolution by breaking harshly all those traditions and habits which are so comforting and so dangerous. But since no sensible man can seriously wish defeat or subjugation for his country, these methods can also be ruled out.

WE ARE LEFT, it seems, with union—a voluntary union with other nations—and this, in fact, is the method chosen by the present British Government in seeking to join the Common Market. Very few Englishmen really want to join the Common Market, or feel that they would be happier as part of a European Union. A good many have come to the conclusion that only by joining can the country be saved from a gradual but steady decline.

This is a reasonable argument. Such voluntary unions have worked in the past. It worked for the American States in 1788, for the Italian kingdoms in 1861, for the German States and Principalities in 1871, for the Australian colonies in 1901. But all these were true federal unions and the price in every case was the disappearance of the identity and character of the original States, which, in any case, were not "nations." The really interesting question is whether Britain can obtain the invigorating effects of union without losing its national identity.

Does national identity matter? This is exceedingly hard to answer. Most intelligent people have accepted that the present anarchy of sovereign states must come to an end if the peace of the world is to be kept, but very few have considered the advantages of nationalism —for instance, as a defence against totalitarianism—or what its value is to individual human beings.

MY OWN ANSWER is confused for I am a Scot. Now the Scots went through all this 254 years ago when they entered the Union with England. The parallel is a close one. For at the beginning of the 18th century very few Scots wanted a union with England, and most of them frankly detested the notion. The union was brought about by a small minority of

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hard-headed, rational men who came to the conclusion, after the failure of the Darien Scheme, that Scotland could never develop economically without English capital and a share in English overseas trade. In return they offered to recognise the Hanoverian succession, because they felt that, in order to survive, Protestants must unite against the Catholic powers.

The bargain was struck; the Union was made. Did it work? Yes, it did. After a slow start, made slower by the Jacobite rebellions, Scotland crawled out of poverty and began to develop at something like the same pace as England. But Scotland had disappeared. It was "the end of an auld sang." Did it matter? Does it matter now? Most Scotsmen think it did and does. We are aware, without being able to express it as clearly as we would like, that to-day Scotsmen are born with something missing, deprived of some part essential for full spiritual and mental development. Some of us still cling to a Scottish culture which has lost its virtue. Some of us have adopted an English culture which we do not truly share or understand. The rest have created a composite "British" culture which even now is phony and fictitious.

So to-day, when we watch the English making the same decision, our feelings are mixed. Sympathy is mixed with a slight but unmistakable *Schadenfreude*. We are like an old man, long impotent, who sees a famous lecher buying erotic pictures in the Charing Cross Road. How are the mighty fallen! For us, having lost our national identity once already, it matters less if we lose it again. Indeed, Scotland may even recover her sense of distinction if Britain is merged in a larger European union. But will England preserve hers? Does it really matter? Is some measure of sovereignty necessary to preserve national identity, and, if so, how much?

On the whole I think these questions deserve more thought than has so far been given to them. For history has made us all nationalists whether we like it or not. If we cease to be nationalists, we must be something else. Will we be more or less? On the whole my advice is that England should avoid Scotland's mistake in 1707 by trying to secure the advantages of economic union with Europe without giving up that amount of political sovereignty which is needed to keep them Englishmen; and I feel some sympathy for Mr. Macmillan (himself a Scot) in his efforts to have it both ways.

John Douglas Pringle

Fourteen Points

I find that the following things have made me angry recently:

1. Almost every photograph of Mr. Macmillan or Lord Home. The contemptuous bloodhound look of the Prime Minister and the high-minded camel's face of the Foreign Secretary put me into an instant rage on behalf of the silly duped people who are satisfied by such corny images of leadership.

2. Any photograph of those Cabinet Ministers who, like Sir David Eccles and Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, are usually labelled well-groomed. Here it is not their faces that drive me to rage, but their general turn-out, which seems to suggest that gentlemen may be successful without being vulgar, or alternatively, that unsuccessful men may be gentlemen without lacking drive. They appear to be the *ur*-Top Men.

3. The double-talk too often found in the columns of the *New Statesman's* "Critic," when the activities of Communist countries are discussed; and the snide references that abound when the activities of the United States are discussed.

4. All the snide remarks about neutral countries and the United Nations, particularly about Mr. Nehru and Mr. Hammarskjöld, that "anti-Communist" journalists and speakers so constantly indulge in. (Not exclusively in the popular press by any means.)

5. The present use of the death penalty which can only truly be justified on the expedient ground that it keeps the police happy. In this connection I especially hate any liberal and other reformers who admit this dishonesty but tell me that the numbers of people involved in the death penalty is too small to make it important.

6. A recent remark by a friend of mine, a "county" woman of intelligence and kindness. She had, she said, no intention of allowing a newly-arrived, newly-rich woman into the county social world just because their children had become friends at the local prep school.

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To my remonstrances she admitted that her attitude was cruel and snobbish, but that like so many intellectuals I didn't make enough allowances for atavism. My anger was not lessened when I thought that this wasteful, silly expense of energy was equalled by the wasteful, silly expense of energy of the quite intelligent, pleasant, new rich woman who was trying to "get in."

7. A very intelligent, successful left-wing don of working-class origin who sneeringly dismissed as unreal and untested the socialism of anybody who started from the middle classes. His own life is that of a rich, sybarite long since cut off from the working class in all but paraded origin. His, of course, is only a striking instance of the concept of salvation by birth or class that goes along with the social mobility of the opportunity state as a kind of sop to conscience.

8. Anger with journalists who say that it is the fault of the man in the street if he allows popular newspapers to mislead and confuse him on the vital issues of the day. Even more with men in the street smirking over their pints at the realistic cynicism of the journalists who tell them this.

9. Gossip columns, especially those which are seeking to add the money-success snobberies of the opportunity state to the old futile social snobberies that still cripple England.

10. All dogmatic demands, whether they come from the disciples of F. R. Leavis or from disciples of C. P. Snow (the two most usual sources), that, by the judicious use of concerted criticism, literature should be restricted to themes and forms that are declared to be "healthy" or "life enhancing," and that other themes and forms must be condemned as "degenerate."

11. I have not yet got over my anger that the attempt of logic and tolerance to amend the laws against homosexuality should have ended in the victory of intolerance and hypocritical expediency to banish female prostitutes from the streets in order not to offend supposedly shocked visitors from abroad.

12. Anti-American talk based on envy or a supposed cultural superiority (see all the *Times* reports from Washington).

13. Left-wing supporters of public and private schools. It can be a reason but no excuse that they need them for their less bright children who cannot pass the 11-plus.

14. Business men who deplore the materialism and lack of spiritual values of England (especially of the workers) to-day and point to the material success of France and West Germany as a lesson to us in how to be a great nation again.

Looking at these apparently incoherent sources of anger, I see that the three sins I detest in England to-day are snobbery, intellectual dishonesty, and the so-called realistic cult of the expedient. They are very closely entwined. In the years immediately following the war I used to think with peculiarly English complacency that not to have been occupied, not, as we then said, to have been forced to acquire the occupation morality, had "saved" England. Now I am inclined to suppose just the opposite. We have no less of the violent crime on the petty level and the get-rich-quick on the higher level which seemed likely to be the material results of occupation. We have more, I think, of the woolly-minded, intellectual dishonesty that comes from never having faced violence in our civilian life and therefore never having had to sharpen the outlines of our beliefs. Our "instinctive governmental wisdom" is hardening into a cover name for expediency and irresolution.

I would support our general liberalism of outlook against all the current ideologies, but liberalism should be neither evasion nor expediency. Proud that we English are not addicted to ideologies, we have avoided any coherent definition of our liberal morality (I speak, of course, of this, and not of any purely political liberalism even in the wider than party sense). The gradual, cleverly-managed yet still imperfect conversion of the Welfare State into the Opportunity State by the Conservatives has deepened this sense of drift. In such an undefined atmosphere, where expediency finds every hypocritical cover and intellectual dishonesty (strong anyway in the propaganda battle of the Cold War) is doubly strengthened, it is not surprising that the mass of English people have sought for some more specious values to clothe the feeble nakedness that has been revealed.

These values have been found in every sort of manufactured prestige. Class snobbery of the most antiquated kind has received a new lease of life, and to it have been added status, money, and academic snobberies; and as a sop to the conscience of the status-seekers a burst of sentimentality about working-class mores that

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forms the new literary romanticism—comfortably enshrined in plays and novels people may salute and then forget them. Religious belief except for a very few has proved no substitute, I think, for a more clearly thought-out social ethic—where it is firmly outlined (as with Evelyn Waugh or the Lord's Day Observance Society) it is too remote from contemporary life actively to affect others, where it is broad and ill-defined it only reinforces the general trend. Periodically, of course, savagery towards sexual indulgence provides an illusory sense that we have a coherent morality to defend. Paradoxically, attempts to infuse moral coherence into English life have been made in literary criticism (*v.* point 10). Creative literary talent still remains one of England's stronger suits, for the creative force is luckily strong enough to withstand such therapeutic offers of moral straitjackets. But of all spheres in which to reform the national morale, literature would seem the most grotesquely ill-chosen. It is not by restricting the forms and content of literature to a "healthy tradition" that we shall feed an anaemic society; our disease is not so much indiscipline as mental poverty and nothing can aid this malady better than a rich, varied, even extravagant literature.

My last point (14), however, must give me pause in this indictment of England. Snobbery, expediency, mental cowardice, all are revolting; but we have gentleness, some goodwill, no flagrant social indecency. I have travelled a lot in these last years—Poland, a peculiarly fine people ruled by a "moderate Communism," is still enough to demonstrate fear and drabness and despair... South Africa, Spain, Portugal—one of the greatest shames of English people is their happiness in holidaymaking or otherwise finding excuse for the injustices, the poverties, and the archaisms of Fascist countries... the United States, refreshing, exhilarating even, but, leaving alone the atmosphere of Mississippi or Louisiana, what of the colourful slums of 63rd Street Chicago, or the Bowery, or Scollay Square, Boston? . . . France, *our* leader, Mr. Macmillan's contemptuous expression has at any rate not extended to the United Nations, to all hope of international law and obligation... West Germany, can any sensitive Englishman have been in Frankfurt and not longed to return home?

But all the same our smugness, our dishonesty, our snobbery, and our expedient disregard for human dignity are becoming disgusting enough to stink a bit even in our beautiful countryside.

Angus Wilson

The Non-Compulsive Society

Since I spend most of my days shut up in one room reading French, I am not the best-informed person on the subject of modern England. Still, I am a wage-earner and a ratepayer and I have reared a family, after a fashion, so I suppose I am entitled to an opinion.

Although it would not occur to me to vote Conservative, I agree with Mr. Macmillan: "We never had it so good." The Germano-Americanism, coming as it did from his mournful Highland-sheep-dog countenance which the cartoonists have made into such a symbol of imperial decline, sounded incongruous, but it expressed the truth. Having been conditioned by the General Strike, I am constantly surprised by the prosperity of present-day England. People can afford luxuries; they expect to relax in the evenings and at week-ends, and they feel entitled to an annual holiday. I sometimes wonder if I dreamt my childhood, when there were soup-kitchens, and passionate men killed themselves organising meetings, and members of the I.L.P. gathered around the harmonium to sing: *"Work for the night is coming!"*

What we did not foresee thirty years ago around the harmonium was that we would eventually get a semi-Welfare State without any Socialist idealism, administered by a Conservative Party, which has jettisoned all sense of Imperial mission. It is difficult to become used to an England in which Trade Union leaders rig elections and show no shame and where, on the other hand, all the millionaires I know have the anxious moral scruples of the old Socialist worthies.

My main impression is that present-day England has no clear ethos for the individual to

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identify himself with or to fight against. The country is astonishingly broad-minded, indefinite and non-compulsive. Of course, a good deal of the old furniture is still in place: Ascot, bowler-hats, the House of Lords, etc.; but none of it is very real any more, and no one even bothers to pretend that it is. I used to feel strongly, for instance, about the public schools, but if there is no Empire and not much Commonwealth, they cannot continue to be what they were. I was not surprised that the *"Angry"* movement died out so quickly; it was strangely behind the times even when it began. I am all for the rogue intellectuals and social satirists such as Muggeridge, Taylor, and *"Beyond the Fringe,"* but their very success means that the soul has gone out of the Establishment. The Suez campaign was our last sign of initiative in power politics and the profound indignation it aroused among people who, according to all the rules, ought to have supported it, showed that the British lion had become a genuinely civilised lamb. Whatever may be said against modern England—and a lot can be said about the ramifications of snobbery, the persistent lack of style, the dimness, the genteel vulgarity—it must be admitted, even by old *New Statesman* readers like myself, that we have one of the decentest, mildest, and least harmful societies in the modern world, outside Scandinavia.

Now I SHOULD HAVE no objection to going on indefinitely in this way, in a relatively small society which has no positive ethos, where politics do not lead to bloodshed, where religion has no bite, where any boy or girl is free to develop, although perhaps not always actively stimulated to do so, and where people of no particular ability do not die of starvation. Given the quite incredible amount of evil that has been committed throughout history in the name of various causes, good and bad, I don't think anyone could reasonably complain if the majority of the English nation henceforth quietly devoted themselves to games, gardening, sex, and the worship of the Royal Family. My worry is, rather, that this situation cannot last.

One reason is that England is not a real country, in the same way as, say, France, where there is room for a margin of error and ill-luck. England, reduced to its geographical expression, is just a floating workshop moored off the coast of Europe, and it breathes with the world. We could allow ourselves to be insular as long as we were also imperial, because imperialism is the heroic and positive process of carrying your insularity beyond your frontiers. Until quite recently, we remained imperial in approach, although the content of our imperialism had radically changed. At the moment, we are neither imperialistic, nor strongly Commonwealth-minded, nor more than tepidly European; we are just gently insular, in an insular way. And, if I have read the newspapers correctly, our present prosperity is a happy accident which could come to an end overnight. It is difficult to see how our peculiar combination of a non-Socialist Welfare State with a mixed economy would withstand a serious economic crisis, let alone forestall it. If we have neither Socialist idealism transforming the workshop so that everyone in it is prepared if necessary to weather storms, nor pugnacious adventurous capitalism exploring new fields, we have no dynamic. I repeat that it is a great privilege to belong to a society with no dynamic, provided it is solvent. Such a society is the paradise of the contemplative individual, but in this case its quietism is very fragile.

ANOTHER, DEEPER REASON is that a community seems to need some general conception of itself, and that it eventually evolves one, good or bad. The whole tone of social life shows that we are still in the fag-end-of-Empire stage. The Labour Party, perhaps through the inevitable interplay of circumstances, has failed to take over, so that politics are not geared to the situation. The people who look as if they are going to set the pace are the new Conservatives, the ad-men, the television élite, the bright boys of the affluent society, whose cynical, shrewd, but probably short-sighted, materialism makes them much more like the French and German bourgeoisie than was the case with the now moribund, aristo-upper-middle-class, traditional English ruling caste. They are clever and sophisticated, much more so I feel than the New Left, but I cannot guess where their ultimate seriousness, if any, lies. Perhaps they themselves do not yet know. I only hope that if they mould the new England, it will nevertheless be a place that Barbara Wootton, C. P. Snow, and Lord James can approve of.

J. G. Weightman

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The Deadlock

IT ISN'T OFTEN that real historical periods suit the convenience of centuries and decades. Yet recently, in Britain, it has been a quite near miss. The 'thirties were clear enough. The 'forties were divided between war and austerity, yet had a common mood. The 'fifties brought a new period, which seems now to be ending, only a year or so late. In many ways, as we move into the 'sixties, the spell seems to be breaking, and the obvious future that was being celebrated only two years ago, after the Conservative victory of 1959, is no longer obvious. It looks as if, whatever we do, we face severe economic tensions, and with them the probability of important political changes. Nothing now seems more unreal than the induced euphoria of the late 'fifties, and the minority renewal of searching and protest, born in those years, has a strong chance of acquiring a general relevance.

The situation throughout has been very difficult to analyse. The decline in Britain's economic strength, and in its imperial position and relative importance in the world, has been overlaid by insistence on the struggle against Communism. It has been hard for us to face an altering reality, and the only terms on which most of us have managed to face it lead us straight into the intolerable tensions of the cold war. Consequently it has been a period of fictions and of manufactured images, which have never been very deeply accepted but which passed into casual circulation because the only alternatives were nostalgic memories of the past or the unformed, unarticulated reality of the present. *Zing!* and *Boom!*, in the newspapers and the glossy magazines, were not the cries of youth and energy they hoped to be taken as, but hired imitations. The extreme rapidity of turnover in intellectual fashions showed only that none was very deeply based.

The importance of the year of Suez and Hungary was that to some people, for more than the few weeks of crisis, the hard reality began to break through. It was a crisis of conscience and of direction, affecting only an articulate minority, but now, as the underlying pressures begin to break through on a wider front, an evident precursor. We have at last reached the point of admitting that the whole future of Britain is a matter for conscious decision between difficult alternatives. What we do not yet know is what kind of decision will be taken, over the next ten years, as the choices become harder and clearer.

In fact the sense of deadlock, or stalemate, which underlay the artificial confidence of the 'fifties, may persist into this period of decision. For it is very deeply based, and there is no real sign of the conflicting interests which sustain it being seriously weakened, either way. For Labour the 'fifties were a decade of political defeat, yet the economic strength of the trade unions has so far been sufficient to prevent any runaway capitalism of the traditional kind. We are blamed almost everywhere in the world: by the Left because we cannot break through to socialism, by the Right because we cannot run capitalism efficiently. Yet with only temporary shifts, the forces in each direction have been too evenly balanced for any decisive course to succeed. The Common Market, in some people's minds, is a conscious attempt to upset this balance, but the real battles that will result from it have yet to be fought.

Again, in our international policies, we are blamed almost everywhere: by the Left because we are still active in military alliances; by the Right because when the heat is on we are never wholeheartedly behind them, but keep looking for peace and disengagement. Yet, again with only temporary shifts, the forces in each direction have been and remain too evenly balanced for any clear and distinctive policy to emerge and succeed. Even a strong Conservative government seems committed to wavering, and in the country as a whole we have both a very high military expenditure and one of the strongest peace movements in the world. It is very far from clear which way we shall go, in the long crisis that lies ahead.

WITHIN THE DEADLOCK, there is a good deal of anger and frustration. Both the minority protest movements and the apparent apathy of the majority seem to me to spring from this main cause. When no clear policy can succeed, virtually everyone has a reason for being either angry or cynical, and energies spend themselves in waste. Almost every social group in the country seems to feel that it has been picked on to be cheated and frustrated. Britain is not a

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tired country, as it is often represented abroad. It is simply that our many energies keep flowing into this long and virtually equal trial of strength.

In this situation, we are of course unusually preoccupied with ourselves. This is what has been misrepresented as insularity, though in fact the outcome here could still be of major international importance. Moreover, the preoccupation with internal deadlock is repeated elsewhere, notably in Italy and France, and certain foreign policies come through as attempts, by parties in this deadlock, to change the internal situation. In a different form, the stalemate is repeated in the world as a whole, between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.

The clash of fixed positions, here and elsewhere, could easily destroy us. What is called "the West" is by that fact inherently parochial: governed and limited by fixed and local assumptions and systems. It is no comfort that "the East" is just as rigid. I want to get closer to Western Europe both because I like its peoples and because, so far as I can see, their immediate problems are very similar in form to our own. From individuals, there and in this country, I often get a sense of movement again. But I get a more regular contact, with new movements and new ways of thinking, from Asians and Africans. It is vitally important, now, to try to see the world from outside the postures of East and West. To remain fixed in them is a merely destructive human insularity.

In the sharpening conflict, and in the deadlock which I expect to continue for many years yet, we must go on trying to clarify, strengthen, and extend a particular tradition, which comes to us through experience in Britain. Under the shadow of the old lion, which is all some people elsewhere see of Britain, there is another and still vigorous life: independent, democratic, and radical; capable of making and living with change, here and in the rest of the world. Whichever way things go, my own commitment is to that, and I have a feeling that in the 'sixties it may be beginning to come through, with renewed energy, to make changes in Britain and to find brothers at the many points in the compass where real internationalism belongs.

Raymond Williams

Deception & Shock

A certain psycho-analyst is said to have said that one loses more patients by the interpretations that one doesn't give than by the interpretations one does. The same point is, I am sure, true of social criticism. Those who speak out against the society in which they live are, and are rightly, judged not so much by what they speak out against as by what they contrive to keep silent on.

It is an interesting, and also to me a terribly depressing, fact about Great Britain to-day, that for all the talk and all the look of there being a revival of radical thinking about our society, there still remain vast tracts of social existence to which the habitual response even on the part of the articulate is silence. And what makes this really depressing is that these tracts, so far from being peripheral to human concern or sparsely populated with problems, are those where it is of the greatest significance to our stability and our sanity what solution we settle for.

I have no doubt at all that there are at least two aspects of life upon which it is our duty to get as close as we can to a considered opinion. We may never quite arrive—and we certainly oughtn't to think we have if we haven't—but we should try. These two aspects of life are sexual morality and religion.

To be indifferent to these two subjects is often regarded as a sign of intellectual lethargy. This may be so, but it has nothing to do with why these subjects are important. They are important because they relate directly, more directly than any other manifestation of human thought or skill, to the basic constituents of human nature: the libidinal impulses, and aggression. Sexual morality is the set of rules in accordance with which man seeks to control or modify these forces; religion is (amongst other things) the set of fantasies by means of which he tries to depict them.

The libidinal element in these two subjects is, I imagine, a matter on which nothing needs to be said. But the connection with aggression may be less obvious. I take it, however, that the kind of sexual situation to which morality is relevant would not arise if the libidinal impulses were unmixed in human nature; for it is to the forces of aggression that we owe directly the disruptive, and, by abreaction, the cohesive, aspect of human relations. In religion

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the connection with aggression occurs largely via what is still to many the most important single theme in organised faith: the teaching about death and personal survival.

NOW THERE WAS A TIME not so long ago when those who regarded themselves as free minds tried to work their way towards a solution on these matters. This is no longer true, and it seems to me a serious thing. Many people who would count as emancipated settle, quite automatically, for some kind of intermediate position between the "conventional" and the "advanced" position. Aware that there are disadvantages in each "extreme" position, they feel that truth must reside somewhere in the intervening ground. Of course it may, but they have no good reason to think so. And the price of their stabilising themselves where they do is often hypocrisy or evasion.

For instance, in the matter of sexual morality a widely encountered position, which is supposed to avoid both the harshness of the rigorous view and the laxity of the permissive view, is that a person's sexual behaviour, whatever it may be, is all right when he acts as he "has to." Now either this view has no application at all, or else it requires (and this is how it is generally understood) a complete reinterpretation of sexual behaviour according to which, say, a great deal of quite ordinary promiscuity, voluntarily entered into, gets treated as compulsive. This is an absurdity.

Or, again, take the question of homosexuality. In the public discussions of this topic that took place about two years ago a propos of the Wolfenden Report, very few of most who supported legal reform explicitly challenged the view that homosexuality is immoral. Of course a number may well have believed that homosexuality *is* immoral, and this belief is perfectly compatible (given certain further premisses about the inefficacy of the law, etc.) with a liberal attitude over legislation. But I'm convinced that many did not believe this—indeed, outside a religious morality, how *could* they?—and by not speaking out they did their cause considerable harm. They reinforced the fears of their opponents by their own pusillanimity, and they deprived their allies of the full support of reason's armoury.

In the matter of religious belief, evasions are most noticeable in the matter of the upbringing of children. Is it not a puzzling, or at least a superficially puzzling, feature of our present system of private education that a considerable number of highly intelligent people are perfectly content not merely to have, but to pay to have, their children instructed in a pervasive set of beliefs about life which they themselves are by way of regarding as totally false?

Or to take another example: It is the mark of a certain school of progressive thought nowadays to hold that the society of the future will be characterised by subscription to "common values." Now presumably there is only sense in talking of common values in fields where there is a possibility of disagreement about values—and disagreement not just on account of ignorance or superstition. If we ask what these fields are, I don't see how any plausible answer could exclude sexual morality and religion. Yet it is an observable fact that those who continuously raise their voices on behalf of common values do not tell us what values in these two fields they would like to see commonly accepted.

I MUST REPEAT that I am not resting my case for thought on these two issues simply on a concern for the intellectual condition of England. For it is my view that until we can accept in our rules and in our conception of life both the good and the bad elements in human nature —and it is not necessarily easier to accept one than the other—we shall fail to deal justly with all these other aspects of culture into which human nature as a whole enters: most notably, the arts. The direct divisive consequences of our educational system aside—and *they* certainly cannot be exaggerated—the most important single factor in our society in reducing the arts to confusion is the unresolved nature of our public attitudes towards the sexual and the aggressive instincts. The price of this irresolution is that we look to the arts to provide us, on the one hand, with crude fantasies of innocence and, on the other, with symbols, even agents, of violence. What better example of this could we have than the state of our theatre to-day, the greater part of which seems torn between two conflicting, and equally undesirable, purposes: to deceive, and to shock?

Richard Wollheim

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Patriotism

ALMOST the instant I grew up a memorable thing happened to me: for scarcely had I passed my nineteenth birthday when I was commissioned into a superb cavalry regiment in one of the most triumphant armies of British history. Our mess included men of remarkable character, cultivation, and assurance; our soldiers were marvellously stalwart, cocky, and amiable; our division, having stormed its way across Africa and up the length of Italy, seemed ready to take on the four corners of the world in arms. We stood cock-a-hoop. Our enemies were humbled, our allies seemed dullards beside us, and it never occurred to me to doubt that this intensely English organism, this amalgam of bravado and tradition, this community of striking men (riddled with feline rivalries, of course, and laced with conscious eccentricities) was the very best thing of its kind that any country in the world could offer.

Only fifteen years have passed, but to-day no young Englishman, standing at that same threshold, seems enabled to enjoy that same feeling of happy supremacy. So hashed and addled have our values become, so unremitting is the self-criticism of our intellectuals, so complex is the transition through which our people are presently passing, that frank pride of country has all but gone by the board, and patriotism is very nearly a dirty word. Only fifteen years, and to-day the intelligent young Englishman all too often seems trapped in a drab web of inferiority. Nothing that is English seems to him to be best. Nothing that is unique to his country seems to him worth preserving. If he goes to Oxford, he wants to rebuild the place in red brick. If he is offered beef, he wants it poached in Chablis. He is the absolute antithesis of a chauvinist: he has practically convinced himself that they order *all* these matters better in France.

This shift of attitudes is in some ways commendable, and in all ways understandable. Nobody can regret the passing of the old flag-wagging pomposity, the vulgarity of dominion, *Pomp and Circumstance* thumping through the old school ties. Much that was fat and ugly has gone with the fifteen years, much that was plain stupid, and I blush at all that was jejeune and blinkered in my own military emotions. We have outgrown the cheap satisfaction of seeing the map splurged with red, and the new gentleness of the cultivated, classless young English more than balances, to my mind, the resurgent ferocity of the oafs.

Nor can you blame my successors for viewing their country with a lack-lustre cynicism. For one thing, the workaday flavour of England to-day is dictated by the middle-aged, born out of the slough of war and depression, and empty of exuberance. Whose heart has not sunk, to see the elderly, grumpy, sweaty English porter crossly awaiting him at London Airport? Who has not heard the deputy assistant regional manager, with a gleam of his dentures and a hitch of his spectacles, reiterating his unshakeable conviction that it can't be done? Whose complaint has not received that nadir of retorts, that *cri-de-cœur* of arthritic commerce, *"It shouldn't have"*? Who has not been testily reminded, by a frumpish cross-patch in a frilly apron, that coffee is only served in the lounge? Who has not felt the dead weight of that worn-out, disillusioned, smug, astigmatic, half-educated generation, weighing lumpishly upon the national shoulders? They would have frightened the enemy, I have no doubt, if the silly Germans had ever landed: but by God, as a symptom of our post-war condition, they certainly depress me.

WHAT IS MORE, the serious moulders of opinion in England have sunk into a sort of neurosis of self-flagellation, infinitely corrosive to the young imagination. It was one thing for the *Manchester Guardian*, half a century ago, to defy all the swollen jingo complacency of an older England, pierce its bubbles and challenge its assumptions: it is quite another for the radical organs of to-day, addressing a nation that has long lost its puffed-up swagger, to expend all their energies and talents in exposing national shortcomings that are stark naked already. We all know the faults of contemporary England (and some of us are sick to death of the assumption that good cooking is a prerequisite to national self-respect): but scarcely a voice is raised, from the alleys of the Higher Journalism, to remind us of her resilient virtues. Our unexcelled justice is only reviled, our advanced agriculture is totally ignored, our vast merchant fleets are forgotten. Half the fun of being English is being an islander, but only the stuffiness of insularity is emphasised, never the exhilaration. No wonder our young men blush for their country, pine for Common Markets

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and Italian cardigans, and accept any callow iconoclasm as the writ of enlightenment.

But patriotism need not be humourless, need not be loud, need not be ungenerous, and in England to-day its eclipse is a mighty asset wasted. We should not mourn our loss of power and wealth, nor allow it to plunge us into self-abasement; the point and purpose of our system is its inexhaustible flexibility, the spring of the pacemaker, the eagerness for new truths (whether baleful or reassuring) that is the mark of the civilised man. We should aspire to be, not the biggest or the grandest of the nations, but the most interesting, and the most honourable. We should remember, when our export figures fall, or our living standards decline, that the unsurpassed excellence of our everyday institutions gives us room to manœuvre, to experiment, to try again, to pull out or change our minds. More than most Powers, we can still presume to precedence in teaching nations how to live; and more than most, our society is still geared to produce men out of the ordinary, figures of wild protest or dogged traditionalism, foxhunters as well as angry playwrights, Montgomeries beside Bertrand Russells. We should be proud of our infinite variety, not our brass-bound unity: of our splendid range of experience, the always fermenting controversies of our intellectual life, our scars as well as our rosettes.

How CAN WE REVIVE this asset, convince the sensitive young English that pride of country need not be coarse or arrogant? I agree with Mr. Martin Green that we want, above all, some new national image or criterion, to replace those tweedy old emblems of gentlemanly ease that have long since gone to seed or emigrated to Groton. Mr. Green suggests the image of decency, open-necked shirts and bicycles at Cambridge. I would prefer something more high-vaulted, something nearer the spirit of fire and salt-spray that—*pace* the grubby urban grumblers—inspired our magnificent forefathers down the generations. I think we should see our England not as a velvet duke, a don, or an empire-builder, and certainly not as a faded pensioner, but as the indefatigable adventurer she has always been, always tacking to the wind, always shifting to the tide, now sweeping home in glory, now shattered but wry in ignominy. She may not be all-powerful, nor even stinking rich: but Merciful Heavens, surely even a hang-dog beatnik or a hairshirt progressive can glimpse her incomparable fascination?

James Morris

Persefone is not only the Goddess of rebirth, of spring, of youth and of all splendour. She is also the mistress of change. She governs the Hours which bring back lost memories and is therefore like the Muse, the need of poetry. Even more so, as, unlike the Muse, she is a link between life and the kingdom of the dead, wedding the Sun and the Moon, a link between opposites, the supreme and final Harmony. In her eyes is the dread petrifying look of the Gorgon. Her name ΠΕΡΣΕΦΟΝΗ is written on the stones, the sky, the night, bodies and all shapes.

Ghika, Nov. 1961.

Igor Stravinsky's ballet Persephone, *with sets by Ghika and words by André Gide, had its London premiere on December 12th.*

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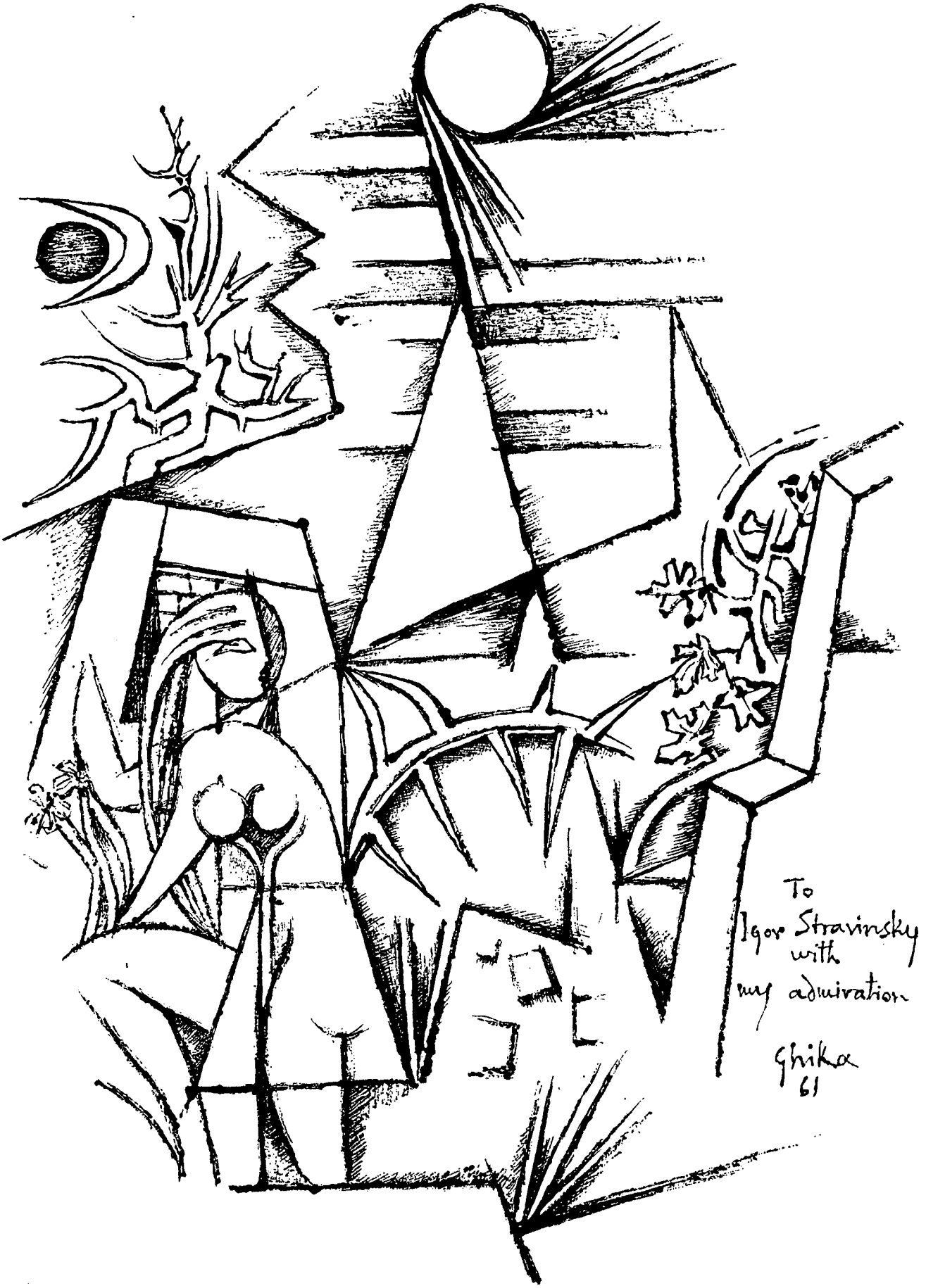

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E. M. Forster

Indian Entries

I first went to India half a century ago. I had no intention then of writing a book. I went to sightsee and to stay with friends—particularly with Syed Ross Masood to whom I subsequently dedicated A Passage to India, *and with Malcolm Darling to whom, still more subsequently, I dedicated* The Hill of Devi.

I kept a journal out there from which I have here selected three entries or rather entry-groups. The journal was a private one, jotted down from day to day. Hence its occasional roughnesses and obscurities. I have made no attempt to eliminate them for the reason that the change might alter the atmosphere. If readers sometimes get held up will they please skip and read on. I have added a few notes.

The three entry-groups are:

(i) The Voyage—Naples to Bombay. (Oct., 1912.)

(ii) Chhatapur. (Nov.–Dec., 1912.) This is, or rather was, a small state in the wilds of Bundelkhand, Central India. I was travelling with two English friends —Lowes Dickinson and Bob Trevelyan the poet—and we had an introduction to Chhatapur's fantastic and endearing Maharaja. I have written elsewhere about him in my biography of Lowes Dickinson. But his main memorial is J. R. Ackerley's Hindu Holiday, *published soon after his death.*

The state contains the famous Khajraho temple-group, our visit to which I have not recorded.

(iii) Aurangabad, Deccan. (Mar.–Apr., 1913.) Then part of the former Hyderabad State. Here my host was a friend of Masood's, a young Moslem, by name Saeed, who then held a local judicial post. He has subsequently had a distinguished career and risen to the top of his profession.

Visits to the Daulatabad Fort and the Ellora Caves are included in this entry. It is the last in the diary. From Aurangabad, and from unforgettable kindness I returned home.

E. M. F., 1961.

I. Voyage

Oct. 8, 1912. Fine violet seas against black behind, and a strip of pale blue and once of green towards the Italian shore, whose faded desolation suggested brigandage, but the only beauty was the parting of the waters by the prow. The water it has struck impinges on the water unstruck, so that a mountain of white precedes it; only a rowing-boat cleaves the blue. Then—on either side of the prow—is imprisoned a huge globe of azure which struggles to rise to the surface and is veiled by foam. Between it and the unflecked are frills and sprays, mostly white, but some are of the green of glacier-streams. These are always changing in detail and arrangement, yet have fixity. The pattern of drops they make on the outer blue is not fixed, so that there is a slow transition from our prow to the variety of the sea.

Too much gab to-day. Hardly a moment to think that I am going to India.

Oct. 9. Better. Sun and soft wind. A flying fish like a tiny aeroplane rose. A little bird—yellow-hammer?—followed us. Porpoise. Watched water again, which sends back foam from the prow's point, seeming to bounce on the blue. Appearance of public-school Indian. Rather trying. Concert: The Rosary.

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Oct. 10. My table lady—once a nurse in the Bhopal Purdahs—deplored the bad home-life of M'ism. She hated the old Begum who hated all English women and addressed them as "tum." "If our children stop in India they get to talk chi-chi and it is such a stigma—we are disgraced." Our Indian on board also repelled her. I was to consider myself the Begum's equal when I met her.[1]

Oct. 11. Port Said. We crossed the track of Cleopatra's flight early this morning, and at mid-day Damietta appeared, misty pink through the glasses but large, then the statue of Lesseps, pointing with one hand to the Canal and holding a string of sausages in the other, struck no unfamiliar note. He stands at the entrance to the Mole, and a crowd of the inhabitants stood round him in admiration; a plage is beyond him.

A barge full of coal was towed up, on it black figures squatting and lying. They awoke like an operatic chorus, more and more excited till they swarmed on deck, each with a basketful. "Quickest coaling station in the world." But they had time to sing, fight, and fondle. Some were women. At night one stood with a beautiful lamp by the plank-way and the East appeared as something happy and terrible. We went on shore too, but saw nothing to equal this. "The sink of Europe" disappointed me as a town, but the Arabs were beautiful and there were signs of sinkiness. "Do you want to see something filthy? Noah? Well perhaps after tea. Here smut postcard," etc. The Indian has reported his cabin mate to the steward for threatening to throw him out of the window. But they are friends again.

Oct. 12. Sunrise over the desert, and passed all day through the East which has been fastened on by artists to a greater extent than Italy so that nothing is a surprise. The Canal was a surprise—so long, varied, and such views. Now pale flat, now mountains of faint yellow and purple, one crossed by shadows that looked like an arm of the sea. Here wandered the children of Israel, listening to Moses. The sand gushed into the canal as each boat passed, dredgers, but little attempt to bank or bind, Arabs, who have to talk to work, are motionless when idle; motionless camels. Hovels with fringes of sacking and a few hens. A humming-bird hawk moth and a butterfly came on board and the lake which dished Pharaoh is full of jelly fish. Suez, and we drowned one of our bird-passengers when unloading some electric lights and the pilot. Crescent moon. As we entered the gulf, the sky was covered with unfamiliar stars.

The sea at night hissed and sparkled but did not flame.

Oct. 13. Lady neighbour: "They tell me that young Indian's lonely. I say well he ought to be. They won't let us know their wives, why should we know them? If we're pleasant to them, they only despise us." I knew not whether to testify, but refrained.

Red Sea. Cool. Came out of the Gulf of Suez at dawn with Sinai range one side and mountainous island right. Following breeze and billows.

Oct. 14. Dolphins, golden brown, passing close beneath us. Owls, a hawk, a hundred swallows. For sunset two cliffs were prepared, and between them, after various lights, shafts of *blue* sky radiated, reversing the usual arrangement. The sea was purple towards the light and blue to right and left. More beautiful if less queer was the sunset of yesterday where a fan of clouds stretched from the focus to the zenith, grey except the outermost rim which were white ostrich feathers.

"The extent of the heat may be conjectured from the fact that on descending to my cabin a tube of Kolynos was found in a semi-liquid condition."—Dickinson's advice on the diarist's method.

Played the shovel-board tournament and spoilt the chances of a promising partner, who was nice over it. Horrid female opponent. By what selection are the organisers of these things found? As if by magic the appropriate colonel or captain is at the top. And is it chance that the Indian has been drawn to play with the wife of his guardian, believed a semi-Indian?

Oct. 17. Moon-set a crescent on its back. Sunset has been like a mosque-dome. Orion lies on his side with Sirius between him and the sea.

Oct. 18. "If you put my bed down there again I'll screw your bloody head off."—"Screw my head?"—"Don't you answer me." Thus my day ended, but happily. There was a concert but I sat reading by the sea, thinking now and then of the apparent happiness of sea-creatures, jelly fish, purple and scarlet, who float near the surface as soon as it is calmer, flying-fish in parties, most frequent at rise and set of sun, what I still believe were water snakes asleep, though others say seaweed, and tracts of

[1] Never did. She ignored my introduction.

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scarlet, many hundreds of yards wide, said to be fish-spawn. There is a sense of joy never conveyed by the air nor by the dashing waters of the north. Coleridge knew of it. Then the moon shone brightly on the sea close to us, and brightly and widely, on the sea far away, between was darkness, flecked afterwards with solid gold. It is difficult to remember the order of things and worse to describe them, yet I sympathise with Luce who is indignant with nature for not being more beautiful. "The poet has thoughts that lie too deep for tears, but he should not go to a mean flower for them." The great poet's dishonesty. Walt Whitman sincere but so stupid.

A varied day within, but ended well, with sense of distance. Slept on deck for the first time, where the remark at head of this entry was heard.

Oct. 21. Have lost a day—thought this was the 20th. Anyhow we arrive to-morrow not more than 24 hours late. We played our special gymkhana—standing on the bollards in a high wind. I hold the championship—80 secs.

Colonel as historian: "You know the Santa Scala at Rome. They say it comes from Pilate's House. Well, it does, for they've measured the house and it fits exactly. Now I'll tell you something. Luther was going up the staircase on his knees once and when he got to the 13th step he stopped and said 'No, it's not good enough', and that was the cause of the Reformation."

Oct. 22. False India—a cloud bank—turned into true, a queer red series of hills, a little disquieting, as though Italy had been touched into the sinister. I had seen little yellow butterflies the day before, and now other kinds fluttered among the baggage. The Taj hotel was the most prominent building—our destination, but a rumour of cholera came. The last horrid meal on the horrid ship ended as we reached Bombay, and we went on shore in style in a native boat, an ugly crew but beautiful skins.

From a group-photograph taken in London in 1912, shortly before his Indian visit. E.M.F. seated. Sacid, afterwards his host in Aurangabad, standing left.

II. Chhatapur

Oct. 27. Motor met us at Harpalpur. Thirty-five miles south with scarcely a deflection through an open country scattered with trees and broken by hills. As the moon rose, a range passed across her. Chhatapur we did not enter; the guest house, high on the right, was civil but got food slowly and feebly, hiding each dish as it was cooked inside a grandfather clock, where I discovered them at last and we ate higgledy-piggledy. No bed clothes either, but they were found, the servants and luggage didn't come till 1.0.

Oct. 28. This is a success. Even Bob Trevelyan is calmed and no longer wants to rush on. The view, which I feared the moonlight had romanticised, is beautiful always—thickly-wooded in front with the temples of the town in the foreground, and barer behind; while in every direction the graceful hills diversify it. The only idyllic place I have seen yet. The guest house is on a narrow ridge which rises to a temple of Hanuman. Bob and I went after breakfast, and a priest, like a cheerful Christ, skipped down the walls to greet us, dressed in a duster and smelling of ghee. He smacked his own body. Attendants gave us custard apples, which we threw away afterwards. The priest said 4 annas would not buy him a new duster, then salaamed.

Oct. 29. The mystery play. Krishna, Radha, and four Gopis sat enthroned on the roof of the palace, and, without saluting us, began. The

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earlier scenes showed their games and the battles of the Pandava War, and conveyed ecstasy, but the last and longest was best. A blue shawl was held up, over which we could see Krishna as a baby in his mother's lap, but a Rishi, who knew his divinity and had come from afar to worship, could not see him. "Show me the child." The women answered: "No, for you have snakes and scorpions about you." "I am a hermit, disguised thus to come here safely. Show me the child for he is my God." "He is too young. You will frighten him." "He is my God and will come out to me." Then he goes, and Krishna begins to wail. The women try to comfort him, but cannot, and have to call the hermit back. Krishna smiles. "Holy Rishi, stop here forever," says the mother. He answers, "I will come back whenever the baby cries." It ends by the mother carrying Krishna out and the hermit circumambulating them and then prostrating. He had checked squares of colour on his chest and back, and a black beard, a man of 55 and a great artist. The rest were boys. He who played Krishna did not alter his dress from manhood to babyhood. The music more intelligible than the Nautch. Often in Major or Minor keys. The dancers sang noises not words.[2]

Dickinson too ill to go, but went to the Palace in the afternoon, and answered His Highness's questions. Books were brought, to be explained. At twilight Bob and I walked towards a tor behind the Guest House, but Zemindars[3] swept down from Hanuman's Hill and would talk loudly. Have not seen such independence in India. Because this is a native state?

Oct. 30. Doctor and Secretary[4] paid their morning call and drove us to Hospital and Jail. The first—though I have since praised it in the Visitors' Book—was a muddled courtyard in which the "out" patients sat—very much "out." A sick calf was among them, and some were in chains. But in the prison there was good health and the men were gently making carpets and durries, or working in a garden of sweet scents and fruits. Nor was Paradise guarded. One had escaped, chains and all, the day before. Drove back through main bazaar, which had architectural design.

H. H. "If the soul has walked with the Gods, and if the Beloved on earth is a staircase by which we can climb to Heaven again, then will you tell me who has put barriers in the way? Have I made myself plain?" And, after a witty sketch of the 17 Political Agents[5] he had known, he told us his present troubles and showed us a letter that he meant to send, which we thought unwise and undignified. However. Stopped nearly 3 hours with him: then reached the tor behind the Guest House unchallenged, but it was dark walking back. D. no better.

Dec. 1. Usual morning call from Private Secretary and Doctor: then elephant came, male, and swifter and easier than her of Gwalior. Two miles along Banda road, under a ridge where tigers live, then the Jungle. It was unlike what I had imagined, yet brought the expected feelings: powerful and hostile. The attendant handed up one fruit after another, all unripe and unknown, and as we advanced between brushwood and rocks, a slight reverberation—such as Reinhardt uses—came at intervals. P. S., like me, thought it a wild beast, but the Mahout said it was the elephant himself who made it when he thought the journey was ending. The Temple of the Goddess of Rain gleamed from a crag on the right. Round it the annual Fair is held every Friday when the rains come. We walked up. A tangle of boulders and trees with a little white-washed masonry: the goddess gesticulated inside, vermilion, but her Brahman was away. The view was wild and beautiful. Descending we came to a marsh where the Elephant walked, picking rushes; in parts it was purple with some subaqueous growth, in others birds swam, and great trees grew by its edge. There was a well opposite a rest house. Bob bathed in it, while P. S. burst out to me about the hatred between Hindus and Mohammedans, which might be laid if the one would give up Hindi, the other cow-killing. He was tolerant and sensible; Mohammedan: has married a Hindu wife I should say; and put down the bitterness to educated men—Arya Somaj and Young Islam. Didn't discuss the English, but from his desire to combine with the Hindus, I expect he dislikes them. "My brother says I am half Hindu."

Dec. 2. Found Padre Sahib—Army Chaplain at Nowgong—when I came back from a morning walk, and at once he said "My young friend, if you go out in the sun you'll know it." A bounder and a fool, yet liked by the people here. P. Sec.: "He is a typical (he meant ideal)

[2] For further accounts see Lowes Dickinson, *Appearances*. Also Ackerley, *Hindu Holiday*.
[3] Landowners.
[4] Both employees of H. H.
[5] British officials then in charge of a state or of a group of small states.

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clergyman. He does not drink and makes peace between officers and men." We asked if any chaplain of his acquaintance had shown any interest in religion. "Oh no—that is not necessary for him, I think." Later, the Chaplain joined us at the Palace: "Now, Maharaja, what's this I hear? You've made yourself ill by fasting. Don't you know that you're transgressing the fundamental rule of religion?" H. H. looked down, laughing gently. Clergyman had already told me that he was H. H.'s spiritual and medical adviser, proceeding with hints on "bouncing natives into treating you well by professing to be furnished with introductions to them that you don't possess." His popularity here suggests (i) how readily the Indian responds to kindness (ii) how incapable of distinguishing good European manners from bad.

Mau on our way to Nowgong. H. H. motored me and Bob. Nowgong, a small Cantonment and a bore; polo; officers' wives with hideous voices and faces of that even pink. Though not more attracted to Indians than I was, I'm irritated by my countrymen more. They made dogs beg. The Political Agent came up, but of him more further on.

Dec. 3. Another fool, but well bred and amiable. Theosophist of the silliest sort who says every moment "But everything is all one" or "You must get rid of the Self and not expect reward," which may be a good ideal, but is monotonous as advice.

Mau is on a lake, beyond which is a hill and tombs. One—200 years old—is called the "Queen's." "She was a nymph and used to walk on the top of the water lilies." Here H. H. would meet Krishna, and is never happy on account of this loneliness. The Palace is fine Hindu-Moslem work in the stucco that is so different from the English and can seldom be procured now. Hall, with columns down the centre, opens from its length on to a terrace, beneath which is the Lake, reached by steps under a great tree. The water is full of growth, but clear. When the sun set ducks flew over and hundreds of teal beat the surface with their wings far away, making thunder. H. H. brought a sorcerer here to make the walls speak by some incense, but the man was a "quake": he forgot the incense and the walls have never spoken. One says "Oh but there is beauty—immortal in a sense—oh but good deeds have value; and many unhappy men have less than you." And it is true he desires the impossible. Yet, how unassuageable his sorrow, because it is a poet's and includes ours. Egoism without imagination is the vilest, with it the highest. We drove back starlit.

Dec. 4. Dinner here—Dewan,[6] P. S., and H. H. all came; so did P. A. and was somewhat baited about theosophy. He has a bee in his bonnet. Fireworks on the slope afterwards. First they let off a groggy Welcome, then all the Catherine Wheels, then all the Flowers. The effect was good but irritated the poor apes—beautiful creatures who were given black faces because they ran from Rama's army.

Dec. 8. The dancers again in Dewan-i-am.[7] Krishna and Radha wore black and gold. What to describe—their motions or my emotions? Love in which there neither was nor desired to be sensuality, though it was excited at the crisis and reached ecstasy. From their quieter dancing, dignity and peace. The motions are vulgarised by words—little steps, revolutions, bounds, knee-dancing—how clumsy it gets and will my memory always breathe life into it? Radha was most beautiful and animated, but a little touched by modernity; and Krishna, hieratic, his face unmoved while his body whirled, soared highest.

The play—by H. H.—was a comic Nativity story. Krishna steals the food of the Pundit who has come to congratulate his mother, for each time the Pundit says grace he heard Divinity invoked and had to come. No fear of repetition. No feeling for climax.

Tea with P. A. at Nowgong. Then we walked by a lake opposite Mau. He said—But I won't sully the beauty of the evening, which was very English, with orange sunset and black clouds. Then the peculiar purple that I've only seen in India appeared in its usual place—half-way up the western sky.

Dec. 9. In a courtyard at Rajgarh: "Do you meditate?" H. H.: "Yes—when I can, for 2 hours, and when I am busy for 45 minutes."—"And can you concentrate and forget your troubles?"—"Oh no, not at all; they come in with me—always—unless I can meditate on love, for love is the only power that can keep thought out. I try to meditate on Krishna. I do not know that he is a God, but I love Love and Beauty and Wisdom, and I find them in his history. I worship and adore him as a man. If he is divine he will notice me for it and

[6] Prime Minister.
[7] Hall of Public Audience in the Palace.

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reward me, if he is not, I shall become grass and dust like the others."

And the P. A. afterwards: "Oh but Maharaja, because you are alone it is no reason you should be lonely. Everything depends on the life within. You *oughtn't* to be lonely. It's so simple. Thought's everything. Then you *won't* be lonely. Can't you see? Oh, what a fellow you are, Maharaja." The P. A.'s two contributions to the mystery of pain and sin are—If you do wrong you are punished though you mayn't feel the punishment; and if you suffer it means that you have done wrong though you mayn't remember what.

Rajgarh—a palace in a fort on a spur of the wooded Vindyas, with a view over jungle and hills; to the right the course of the Ken was marked by darker trees. Some good paintings.

Dance again.

P. A.: "We should imitate the Infinite. If only we would, there wouldn't be this sinful outcry in England about Conscription. Now I'll explain. Self-sacrifice is the essence, and when the Infinite created, it gave something of itself away." I: "But to whom could it give it? It's only transferring this orange from one hand to another."—"Never mind. The act of giving was there, and we must do the same. Of course it's a paradox. Everything's a paradox. But we must sacrifice ourselves to our country. What could be nobler? After the country comes the Family, then our Father and Mother." I advanced the claims of cosmopolitanism, which to my bewilderment he conceded.

Dec. 10. To-day—Tuesday—is lucky for the eastward bound though not for me.[8] Still we were let to go. Farewell to Dewan in his house. H. H. gave us disappointing Japanese boxes and his photograph; also six Rajpoot paintings for which Bob hinted. "But one would do anything to get Rajpoots." An affectionate and sad goodbye. He likes me least, but all of us. Hate going. Tongas and luggage hours getting off. Magic light on the pass between Nowgong and Harpalpur; as though two halves, light and dark, had been put together to make each tree.

III. Aurangabad

March 24, 1913. Uncomfortable night in train. Mahammedans squatting in rows, I alone lay. W.C. full of melons, truss of hay among my baggage. One of the M's was a Tahsildar[9] who announced my arrival to Saeed; wire missed, as often in Hyderabad. Pillar of dust at Dak Bungalow—like smoke at first; when it passed through a tree the leaves rattled. Saeed drove up as I was having a bath and took me to stop with him in a lovely wooden hall: two rows of triple arches which, like the internal pavilions, were painted blue; my bedroom—half the height—was to right, servants to left. Square tank of green water.

S. and I walked to a deserted garden, belonging to a vanished palace; the gardener gave us champak blossoms; trays for fountains along the hillside. The lovely mosque, with aisles like that of Hyderabad; it was dark when we got back.

After dinner to a mosque close by in moonlight; here S. and "barrister" talk about England and want to catch fish in the tank, but it is thought impious. Charming, with the feel of roughened stones under one's socks. Barrister not a fool, but undistinguished. S. has turned into a dashing young dog; Baldeo[10] impressed by him.

March 25. To court with Saeed, but he only signed documents. In the sub-judge's room more went on; civil surgeon giving evidence in murder case. Punkah boy, seated at end of table, had the impassivity of Atropos.—To Jail where the superintendent met us, "a perfect gentleman" but I didn't like him: thick bare lips in the middle of a black beard. Jail clean and dreary.—Tomb of Alamgir's minister: picnicked on its edge off "catkins," carrots, and tomatoes which the policeman and the prisoners brought us and washed in the rills. Impossible to be happy near an English tomb.

Drive after tea to a comic edition of the Taj. Not bad at a distance, but proportions and materials are wrong. Stands in pleasant garden. S. rode curvetting horse. Enjoyed all this day.

March 26. Court morning: invitation from sub-judge reached me officially and was answered. After ten we rode, the horse became an odd shape and I fell off on my right-hand bottom. "I am thankful to God it was no more," said S., but is callous and sensible over illness. We went to a very lovely Mahammedan shrine, but I was too shaken to appreciate it and my drawers were coming down. I remember small buildings divided by pavements and flowers with a trough of a tank beneath them.—On to the Golden Palace, a ruin under the hills, but it was locked and twilight; rode slowly to the "Taj": saw a light in a mosque and found none on arrival:

[8] Dickinson and Trevelyan were bound for China and Japan, I for Bhopal.

[9] Official.

[10] My servant.

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were tangled in steep ground. Romantic—the ruins are endless, far flung among the lovely undulations, and the dried-up fountains touch imagination. Not even at Fatehpur did I feel the vanished Moghul Empire thus. S. is a remnant of that empire: many a young blood must have jogged through the evening before him.

Moghulai dinner at sub-judge's—S., me, Mohammed Ishaq, Barrister, host and superintendent of police, a vast young man like an Italian. Our host made a speech about the goodness of England to India which gave me gêne. We sat cross-legged and except for one chilli, supposed an onion, I came to no harm. Thirst awful.

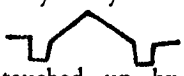
March 27. Diarrhœa after banquet. Kept quietish all day, but rode in evening, and most successfully. Horse played no tricks and we trotted and cantered over open country to Mahratta village. Saeed burst out against the English. "It may be 50 or 500 years but we shall turn you out." He hates us far more than his brother does. Horse curvetting all the time in the sunset. Very jolly. Patches of green among the barren—we rode from one to another to admire. Horse played no tricks: S. made his play—an amiable show-off. Energy and sense at the bottom. He is a reckless talker, but realises one has few friends.

Dinner at Barrister's—felt sick throughout and was so after. My first upset since Chhatapur.

[From other days at Aurangabad.] "The strong man beats the weak and will not let him cry out." "If we are all unhappy together it doesn't matter."—Urdu proverbs. "And what is the greatest defect of Indians in your opinion?" —"Inability to co-operate" was the line I selected. "Tik" said Moulvi Sahib.[11] I got through a difficult moment well. I might have said untruthfulness or vanity, but they are not accusations that can be borne or profited by. Poor Indians'll do nothing yet: no constructive policy except vague "education": but it is character not knowledge they need, and they will get this best by building up a framework of social intercourse. At present the educated class has created no conventions, and doesn't take care of its health. The drinking water here has been perilous. On the other hand a capacity for friendship triumphing over suspicion and forgetfulness. This must bind. And sanity about death removes an emotional drain. Injustice to Europeans, not more than vice-versa.

[11] Tik = "Right!" Moulvi—the title, here applied to a school inspector, implies intellectual respect.

March 28. Daulatabad. Unearthly start, nor did it ever appear why. Arrived about 9.0 and visited Hammam and Mosque in Pathan style: keeper of the Fort took us and would send us breakfast from his house: great delay: Saeed awfully nice and understanding. The female Christian servant of someone at the Dak Bungalow gave us tea.—"Tell the Keeper Sahib that I wish I could speak to him in Urdu." S.—"He replies that it is the highest pleasure to meet you: such modesty is only found in those of noble birth.... I have said something flowery with many Persian words in it to him for myself and you...." Not till mid-day did we attack the Fort which was as queer as a fairy story but without architectural beauty.



is a section of the hill. The scarp must have been touched up by man. The moat excavated. Crossed by a bridge: pools of waters and caves where leopards live. The path then entered the rock by a spiral tunnel: a grille once closed it at the top, over which a fire was lit, but I don't believe this worked. It is the Oriental superfluousness. There were old guns, whose metal was cool though stone was unbearable, a crack of cool water in the rock, a palace on the top and above it, mounting as in a dream, the grass-grown top of the hill with one gun more "made by a Hindu," said S., disproving Alamgir's bigotry. Looking over the parched Deccan I thought, "What should I do with such a kingdom?" S. all for ruling, though not knowing what it means. He said, "When I look down on walls I thought big below, I despise them." After lunch I dragged him to walk over quivering rocks: the air scorched but did not hurt. Round the moat outside: the mountainside seemed inlaid with monstrous animals at first: a rock bridge crossed the chasm, as at the main entrance, then plunged into a cave. Heat and silence and green lumps among the rock, and the even curve of the scarp. Reminded of the impregnable mountains of my youth's Wild West.

Ellora. Kailas at Sunset. More amazing than anything in a land where much amazes. Supporting cornice of blackened monsters—elephants, griffons and tigers who rend. The great mild face of a goddess, doing cruelty, fades into the pit-wall.

March 29. Went over hillside to Buddhist group. No beauty as at Gwalior or Sarnath. Giants round their seated master. The Hindu caves, very different, had no beauty either: the brute

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aroused instead of somnolent: that was all. We picked up "Maharaj" here: S. and Mohammed Islag were charming to him, as to all servants. Are they typical? Beggars they cleared away. Maharaj sang Hindi love-songs to us in the Indra Sabha cave—Indra, said S., was fond of music. The heat great and we had no Thermos. S. and M. I., who don't care for sightseeing, especially when the sight is Hindu, didn't want me to stop behind. Am I offensive and irritable on these occasions? S. and I got askew slightly: he would guard and order me and invent imaginary perils of beast and reptile. Also "You have got a wrong idea of the Indians: they are sensitive but not foolishly sensitive" when we got home. Lunch in pyjamas. At 5.0 they drove off, I going as far as Roza and walking back to Ellora.

To caves alone for sunset: knocked at entrance to warn leopards but none answered. Went to mosque but the worshippers had gone.

March 30. Back at Aurangabad. Conversation with S. about debt depressed me. They yearn for political freedom and don't care about economic. Won't leave one fine impulse ungratified—must be well dressed, housed and served and lavish hospitality. "God gives me food to eat. Brother and I were brought up by our father who gave us everything. We lived at a very happy time. Now that I see my kids (his nephews)—I must give them a good time too. I hesitate to marry lest I care for my children more than my kids. They must want nothing." Then I: "But you must retrench somewhere." "Oh—everyone is in debt—my father died poor—I will die the same. Give your sons everything, educate them, but leave no money, lest lawsuits come. Now we all love one another, brother, the kids and I."—But I, from these sweet strong impulses, saw temptation springing.

"I know what family I shall marry into—it is a family at Delhi. The girls are not rich but well educated and fair-skinned.... I wonder what my auntie, my mother's sister, will arrange. I am in love with her already though I do not know who she is... is that not strange!" Then later, "Aha! I have heard from my Auntie—it will be the daughter of the daughter of the sister of the head of the family. Is not that nice? With European girls I must be very particular indeed—not even a little flirt.... Then they think I do not care about them and afterwards I have to explain.... I think ideal friendship with a woman is better than other things, though it is love in a way, for one wants to kiss. That is my experience after trying all." Morning, I revisited Caves alone. (Writing 5 days after); their impression is already fading, I think because there is no beauty and I do not believe in the devil, whose palace they are. They are Satan's masterpieces to terrify others: the moustached Buddhas are not glaring at me. Went over the head of the Waterfall, and in the upper reach, beside drying pools, was another cave colony: the bees and possible leopards did alarm Mohammed Ishaq; servant met me at the Kailas with soda water. Weary drive—called on superintendent of Daulatabad Fort and talked cultivated Urdu. "Ge han, main bahut salaam deunga."—Eurasian gent, "No—he is asking you to stop the night." S. rode to meet and hurried me over some vast palace of Aurangzebe in the twilight: ruined divans, hammams, cypresses. Then home to some of the talk I've indicated.

March 31. Diarrhœa again—having thrown away my corkless chlorydyne—and it was difficult to get through the day without being sick, as S. gave a lunch followed by an ice-cream party, and Mr. Sirdar a vast and boring dinner—about 20 of us and as many courses. I tasted 19, in terror. S. promised to go early but ended by enjoying it and we stayed till 12.0. Had some explanation of the Aurangabad water-system—pillars may be to diminish pressure off weak pipes, or to cool water. Source between two soils—recently discovered.

Moulvi Sahib—nice man with intelligent bushy head. Short drive with timid barrister between ices and dinner.

April 1. Diarrhœa quiescent. S. drove me to Moulvi Sahib's who lives close to "Taj"—inspector of schools and certainly the most intelligent man in Aurangabad. The elder generation of Indians are more distinguished than the present and more capable of a look round. He and I talked about S., whom he will warn. Train barely caught. Garlands. S. embraced me; more charm than swagger in the boy. I like him and sense may be ripening in the undergrowth. Here endeth India.

April 2. Travelled Intermediate Manmad–Bombay. Boat twelve hours early. Fearful scuffle to get off—couldn't get Saeed cakes at Mongini's. It's as if I am to do nothing for him, however slight. "The accounts of friends are written in the heart" is his explanation.

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Colin MacInnes

A Wild Glance at the Book Trade

WALK INTO a Marks & Spencer's. It's brightly inviting, goods attractively displayed, service prompt and amiable. I once bought a shirt there with the wrong cuffs. If you try to change anything in "traditional" English stores, you're Lazarus beating pitifully on Dives' door. Bold, although quaking, I returned with my unsuitable drip-dry. The girl regretted she'd not the type I wanted, summoned the supervisor. This dread person didn't welcome me as her tribe do with a chilly "Can I help you?"—instead, she did: listened, gave me an immediate cash refund. I swooned.

I stare-shop and buy at Cecil Gee's. I've never entered their shops without some brisk youth asking what I want, unfolding current mysteries of cosmopolitan attire, affably seducing me to take something. Once, when they hadn't got my size, the sharp lad got on the blower to Barney at another branch, wrote me a note of introduction, speeded me cordially from the street door. At Barney's I was welcomed by name, like Mr. Getty.

At Dobell's jazz record shop, the salesmen are scholars. Surrounded by LP sleeves of eye-bewitching beauty and laboratory listening-booths, they will impart, without patronage though a hint of just hauteur, esoteric counsel on what's new. I'd heard at a Basie concert a number whose name I couldn't recall, and ventured to chant it to one of these bearded sages. As I reached my faltering line-two he emitted a faint Yogi smile, stretched backward for a disc, and put it on the player with an assured yet questing gaze. It was it, and I bought others he with detachment recommended.

These stores and countless others in our cities are of the 1960s: lively and practical in light and lay-out, stocked with modern goods of quality, their staff well-informed, eager for service. The whole trend is for places where it's a pleasure—seems a privilege—to buy; and with imaginative marketing, to create trade where little was before.

NOW LET'S to a bookstore. Your heart sinks? Small wonder! Who hasn't noticed this?

Commercially, we drift into a backwater: the contemporary spirit has completely passed them by. Interiors are drab, dull, vaguely "cultural," though not in any real sense. Books are "displayed" in an incoherent amateurish muddle. Staff uninformed, uninterested, seeming to dislike their job. Considering where they are, what they don't know's prodigious; and to me no one, not once in any English bookshop, has ever recommended a book spontaneously. In some stores, when you've tracked down a volume by your unaided intuitions, the problem is to find anyone who'll take your money.

The worst are the chain-stores, which it's impossible to call "book" shops at all: they're village stationers blown up to urban size. Some, of latter years, have been hopefully refurbished, leaving stock and staff as vague and dim as ever. Then there are the substantial places, conservative or with pretensions to modernity, whose tone's respectable if aloof and uninspired. (At these stores they may have heard of it, but haven't got it, though they can get it for you in a matter of a few weeks.) Some new shops have arisen, splendid in glass, rubber plants and sculpture, proudly displayed as models to the trade, and with sales machinery as decrepit as before. Betwixt and between are a hodge-podge of places about which the visitor's most struck by their smug or optimistic ignorance, well-intentioned self-satisfaction, total lack of style, alertness or enthusiasm, basic defeatism and vulgarity.

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In this desert are oases. Browsing bibliophiles are nursed by antiquarian and specialist shops of musty charm... but these lie outside my diatribe which is concerned with the sale of newly-published books. Shining in the Sahara are a few to which one could take a literate foreign friend without disgrace—Dillon's University, for instance, or High Hill on a smaller scale. The stores selling paperbacks exclusively are excellent, for reasons soon to be suggested. For hard-cover volumes, that's about the lot.

The salesmen in these places inspire sorrow: whether the breezy, patronising ignoramus whom you've just disturbed from something, lost souls, usually young, pathetically adrift among their tomes, or the condescending "cultivated" category whose wan scorn suggests that doing this honourable job is slumming, and as for being interested in *sales*....

If this preamble isn't silly and unjust, something is wrong—and, I believe, avoidable. And closer examination may suggest the villains aren't the booksellers, but publishers content to use a semi-derelict apparatus for marketing a first-class product. And this for the fatal reasons that they seem afraid of bookshops, afraid of libraries, afraid of the reading public, actual and potential.

Basic dogmas in the trade are that people will buy paperbacks, costing up to 6s. or so, in profusion, and whatever be their literary content. There is deemed to be a small public for luxury books—art albums and so forth—who will pay high prices for books of quality. As for those purchasers of newly-published works costing up to about £1, one must be very careful! This public isn't large, alas, needs tender nurture, the price must be low as we can make it—15s., 16s. is about the most they'll pay....

This ridiculous theory, which publishers' sales staff and—for reasons which are highly suspect—buyers at bookstores all pathetically cling to, is based on two total fallacies. The minor error is to suppose that for those above the paperback level of price, any difference between 15s. and up to 25s. exists at all. Such people won't quibble over a few bob when they buy a theatre stall—it just wouldn't occur to them to do so. And if they're going to buy a hard-cover book at all, so long as the price is under their normal maximum, they just don't care.

The major fallacy is that the volume of demand for books is limited. At present it may be so, because of pathetic marketing methods. But there's a lot of money around, and people will pay anything for anything provided they are made to feel the product is desirable, and that to buy it is a "sharp," fashionable, worthwhile thing to do. About books, the public isn't made to feel this at all.

Although the prestige of books has relatively declined as that of new media has risen, they still have an intrinsic, though not (save in paperbacks) popular, prestige. They are seriously reviewed, often quoted from (usually without acknowledgment to publisher or writer... but however), they are an export of cultural and financial influence. "A book" still impresses far more, in 1961, and its name is remembered longer, than do ideas projected by any other medium except the theatre. For the press, film, telly, radio, books are still a subject of comment, or else the actual raw material of these media themselves.

Theatre and books are the two "source" arts: all others are more or less parasitic. But these pop media push their products enthusiastically. The book trade, which supplies so many of the germinal ideas these other media make use of—and which takes all the initial risk of launching the creative product on the world—fails to push itself with energy or confidence. Apart from advertisements in literary and trade journals, the publishers pin their trust in the existing retail disorganisation and sit back, gentlemanly, while the parasite media capture profits and prestige that should be due to publishing. So that we find the ludicrous situation whereby the book trade is subsidising, intellectually and in fact materially, media richer than itself in capital and infinitely poorer in ideas.

An example. It is not to the artistic credit of the British and American film industries that most of their movies are now "based" on previously published books. But since they are, film companies—bereft of original ideas themselves, and apparently incapable of finding anyone who can directly supply them—arrive on the publishing scene and offer the publisher-and-author £1 out of which they have high hopes of making £100. The publisher-author combination, in their gentlemanly-amateurish fashion, fall over themselves in eager and delighted joy. Bedazzled, they accept far less than they could get; and are in ecstasies to see the author's name appear in a minor credit on the eventual film (however little relation this may bear to his original creation), and never

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seem to notice that the publisher gets no credit whatsoever.

THERE IS A LESSON in the sensational success of the paperback "revolution." A decade or so ago, English publishers maintained that nobody here would buy soft-cover books at all—except possibly for Penguins which were, in effect, reprints of hard-cover books aimed at much the same readership as the original edition, or Pelicans of a "cultural-political" nature. The Americans and Continental Europeans taught them they were quite wrong, a new industry arose, and an entirely fresh readership was captured. Yet though delighted and amazed that paperback publishers bought rights from them, the hard-cover publishers reflected: "that's all very well for cheap books, but there's not an untapped public for volumes in hard covers—nor can we hope to increase sales much in this market we've so laboriously created."

What proof is there of this? The key to the paperback success is that people will buy books if they are packaged and marketed with enterprise and skill. Consider one totally untapped public for hard-cover books as well—the under-25s. If you visit them in their pads, you find two things there that they never knew they wanted till they were persuaded that they did—LP recordings and piles of paperbacks. In each case the producing companies, realising the existence of this teenage market, targeted their products at them by deft presentation, and by creating shops where young people feel at ease and welcome. Of course, some discs and paperbacks are good, some rubbish, but that's just as true of hard-cover volumes.

The under-25s spend £800,000,000 a year. Is it really impossible to divert some of this to the hard-cover book trade? If teenagers pay £2 for an LP, 25s. for a jazz concert ticket just like that, will they never buy a 15s. book? Why does one never see the wage-earning teenagers—that is, young people other than students as yet without an income—inside a book shop? Because they're illiterate morons? But their choice of LPs and paperbacks doesn't bear this out. Can it be because they find hard-cover bookstores dreary, repellent, thoroughly out-of-date? You rarely see them in the Wigmore Hall, but you often do at the Festival Hall because they feel this place is of their age, is made for them. Can one imagine what might happen if they thought a bookshop was "for them"?

BEFORE THINKING of more effective bookstores, and of how these could be financed, we may first be struck by the retiring modesty with which publishers fail utterly to promote their trade in general. Here are some vulgar thoughts. Has anyone ever seen advertisements in the press suggesting people should read books as such? Or a telly commercial promoting the same subversive notion? Has the book trade as a whole ever called in an advertising agency to launch a campaign in this direction—as all other major trades have now long done? If one believes in one's product, is it wrong to try to widen the public for it? Crude? Too expensive?

Analogies are always the wrong ones, but what about the somewhat comparable record industry? And if purists retort that this markets rubbishy pops, the answer must be yes, it does, and also the best music in exactly the same spirit. And so far as hard-cover books go, one can fairly estimate that perhaps 70 per cent are totally ephemeral, 20 per cent merely good, and 10 per cent what might be called literature. And since the 10 per cent can't be sold unless the 90 per cent are, publishers should be anxious to sell as many as possible of both, for "cultural" as well as commercial reasons.

There can be no doubt that the pop art of the LP sleeve has made records (dull objects in themselves, much as most books are if contemplated purely physically) a highly desirable "prestige" object to the buyer. Cast your mind back even ten years, and you may recall the grotesque record covers that then existed. That muse drifting from a cloud, for instance, above a bobbed maestro peering up from his pianoforte! It is the LP sleeve that made the record industry, and to-day the most audacious and often wonderful sleeves are liked and accepted in spite of initial hostility from the dealers. Connoisseurs even collect sleeves for their own sakes, pasting them on walls, screens, lampshades—a barbarous practice, but indicative of admiration.

Do they ever do the same with book-jackets? Of course not, and they're damn right. Now assuming jackets are one of the factors that help to sell a book—and though I don't think they're a vital factor, in bookshops they certainly can help—about English jacket design to-day there's only one thing to be said: it's just terrible; not

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modern, not seductive, and if "artistic," very art school indeed. This is because publishers, who are entirely to blame, have never sat down to think out a novel policy and plug it with consistency. What happens to-day, even in good firms, is that they use semi-pros, distinguished nonentities, or else occasionally approach a real artist who's not specialised in the matter; and when they do—which is rarely enough—don't follow this up and try to get the man involved, concerned in the whole problem.

In the U.S. and Continental Europe, and now even in the U.K., there are artists who are exclusive specialists in LP design. They know all the technical aspects, and concentrate their talents on this target. They earn good fees: not the disgraceful £15 15s. that English publishers offer a jacket designer, and a bad one at that. What's needed are selected, professional, full-time and well-paid designers who do nothing else or chiefly this, and from whom the highest standards of competence and achievement could then rightly be demanded.

New and startling fashions in jacket design, good in themselves, can be made commercially valid: the LP sleeve has proved that quality and sales are not incompatible. Even paperback covers, which unquestionably promote sales (and doubtless do so more than hard-cover jackets ever can), are vivid and inventive, even if brash and garish. At least they haven't that worst of faults if you want to sell anything—prim insipidity.

And so some features of ungentlemanly but sales-inducing bookstores, aimed at increasing purchases by the converted and, even more, luring some of the millions who buy paperbacks or nothing:

(1) Places not large (the fault of some of the new "modern" ones is that they're much too big and pretentious for what one finds inside in the way of goods and service), central, and decorated simply and attractively on the lines of a Marks & Spencer store.

(2) Books not on shelves or on flat tables, but in display trays and stands you can easily walk around.

(3) Sales staff entirely unconcerned with money (other than in issuing a purchase voucher) as in a Lyons Corner House, where the girls' job is to get you food.

(4) Cash receipts either at open desks on presentation of the voucher (not dreadful ticket-collectors' boxes, as in Messrs. ————'s), or if the public—no doubt rightly—isn't to be trusted, at the door on the supermarket system.

(5) One or two hand-picked staff who won't be so much selling as recommending.

(6) Selected books of the week, or month, chosen by the store staff and highlighted. (The Top Twenty idea is common, but there's nothing inherently wrong with it as a sales stratagem: everything depends upon the choice.)

(7) Listening-booths where taped extracts from the book and its reviews, recorded by writers, critics, or actors, could be heard.

(8) Film-shots of these same people and of themes from the books, shown on small screens.

(9) Huge sensational photographs of writers displayed and often changed. Likewise enticing pages from books blown up to monster size.

(10) Readings by writers in person. (Some of my colleagues—like myself—will find items 7–10 nauseating. But others, I'm sure, will jump at them.)

(11) Acceptance of deposits to retain a book, and advertising this fact. If people have paid down even 5s., they'll come back with the balance.

(12) Descriptive hand-outs on the latest books. Why is it record shops inundate you with these, and bookshops never? They can be quite useful.

Swallowing at these revolting suggestions... I think we should remember that so many of us take "books" entirely for granted, but that thousands who could do, don't. Books are exotic, peculiar, "not theirs." But the passion for education, the fact that millions of "quality" paperbacks are marketed, do suggest there's a vast hidden market; and it's at this kind of buyer these suggestions are directed.

Shops such as these would cost big money, chiefly in respect of staff. Rents are high, but well-trained salesmen, with time to do their homework properly, would have to be much better paid than they are now. (Has anyone ever met a boy or girl whose present ambition is to work in a bookstore? Yet why shouldn't it be? As things are, people drift into this weird occupation.)

The answer must be to increase volume of sales per head of staff, and per square foot of rented space; also to increase the price of books initially though the ultimate objective, if the sales rise, should be to reduce them.

To the assertion that books are too cheap—as they are—the rejoinders from the book trade

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are that "there isn't the public for mass sales" and that "if we revealed the disgraceful fact that books are desirable, delightful articles, then the government might slap purchase tax on them."

In reply to the second, I don't think that's likely—but if the government did, well let it! LP sales have gone up in spite of tax entirely through good merchandising; and so have sales of dozens of articles you can persuade the public they should buy. One can even see a direct relation between what it is well known the public most desires, and what the government thinks can be purchase-taxed without general objection. That books are not at present subject to this tax is regarded, by right-minded publishers, as a cultural victory. Maybe it is; but it's no proof of a commercial victory.

To the objection that higher prices would strangle the tender neck of the meagre book-buying public, I've already tried to reply, and would vehemently add this. Because they depend for retail sales on booksellers who, being under-staffed, under-paid, and thoroughly defeatist, publishers listen much too much to the assessments these men make of the real book-buying potential. "We're in direct touch with the public," says the bookseller's buyer to the unfortunate publisher's salesman, "and believe you me, if we say a book won't go, it isn't." And the publishers add, half-plaintively, half-admiringly, that they do often turn out to be right.

Well, as things are, of course they do! But the short answer is that if booksellers aren't themselves interested in a book, and don't plug it, the public reaction will automatically be less. The essential answer is that since booksellers have failed completely to attract a modern, lively, book-buying public on a large scale, then evidently the sort of bookworms they do attract will give them a notion of "public taste" that is entirely wrong. If you ask the wrong person, as publishers do when they listen to buyers at moribund bookstores, you will get an answer that is "right" for them, but fundamentally erroneous.

So what "should" publishers do? The answer would seem to be for the publishers collectively, or for some of them collectively, or for individual publishers who have or can raise the resources, to go into the retail trade on a large scale. Publishers provide most of the capital in the trade and manufacture most of the product (including the discovery of its raw material: has anyone ever heard of a bookseller finding a new writer?). The booksellers, in relation to what they are trying to do (or should be), are grossly under-capitalised. In addition, publishers allow booksellers generous credit terms, and are thus subsidising them by short-term interest-free loans. The position at present is that much of the endeavour of the publishers sinks into the damp sands of chronic retail inefficiency.

If this should ever occur—if publishers went into retail business—it would not affect specialist bookshops in particular chosen fields, nor enterprising and adequately financed stores. On the contrary, the stimulus to sales should help them. But if it did lead to the disappearance of some old curiosity shops that pass for bookstores, no one would shed a tear because no one would even notice their departure.

AND NOW A VENOMOUS word about what are called "libraries," my chief spleen being directed at the commercial ones. In 1961, I see no reason, nor justification, for their existence whatsoever. It seems to me naked robbery that good W.1. and S.W.1. ladies should troop in, laden with purchases from the cosmetics counter, to select "their" book. These people can well afford to buy books, and not ponce on the publishers and writers as they do.

There is nothing immutable about commercial libraries. They came in with Mudies in the last century, and let them vanish once again. And the only way for this to happen is for the publishers to have the guts to refuse to sell to them at all. (Or perhaps say to them okay, you hire out our books at a loss to us, and please let us hire out aspirins and contraceptives at a loss to you.) They are archaic places: old-fashioned, uncreative, interiors like morgues.

Nervously, the publishers reply that "they're a great help with first novels." Since an early book of my own was "banned" (if you please!) by two of them, I'm not personally convinced of this. (The hidden censors in England are the library-buying committees, and the fathers of the printers' chapels. Three such fathers—and not the printers who employed them—refused to set up the book I mention.) But anyway, forgetting this private grudge, it's a defeatist argument. It means the book trade can't do its job and hands it over—on the worst possible terms—to chemists' shops and department stores: who (and has any publisher thought of this?) are not using "their" libraries to help the book

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trade, but as a lure to bring in customers for quite different goods.

As for the public libraries, immediately it's said—and rightly—that many of those who use them could afford to buy books, someone ups and quotes a poor old widow, or a studious youth, who hasn't got the money. Certainly, these categories do exist (especially the poor old—far more than most of us realise), and arrangements for free loans to them could be made with goodwill and ingenuity. Once it is thus made sure people in real need are catered for, there remain two alternatives for publishers to what occurs at present, which is that they (and their writers) are defrauded. The first is to refuse sales at all to public libraries for general free reading. This is what "I would do." Why two hundred people, say, should read one 15s. book (at a price discounted anyway to 10s.), and why the same two hundred should not all go to the theatre at the price of one 15s. stall, has always been a mystery to me. And to the nervous assumption that if people couldn't borrow books they wouldn't read at all, so that it's better to get the price of one book for two hundred readers than nothing, an excellent reply is that it's precisely because people know they can borrow that they don't buy.

The alternative is to charge the libraries a fee per reader. This has often been mooted—notably with characteristic skill, vigour, and persistence by A. P. Herbert (whose initiatives for all of us we take disgracefully for granted). The proposal aroused a howl of rage from librarians who at once revealed what had been long suspected—that a great many professional "book-lovers" detest those who create the books they love, and who provide the reason for their bureaucratic existence. By comparison with the music trade, we writers and publishers, at all events, are mugs. If so much as a fragment of copyright music is played in public anywhere in the kingdom, the Performing Rights Society sees that fees are collected. Certainly, to enforce a lending fee would be better than nothing; but it seems to me to betray a principle without adequate advantage and, worse still, without positive result in the essential buying direction. For it is only when we can stop all these good people pinching our work and ideas for nothing, that we can find out what the public really devoted to reading may amount to.

THE REAL ROGUE here isn't the librarians, but their masters the municipalities. Though they have a statutory right to levy a rate for cultural purposes, most of them use it in a niggardly fashion or not at all. If the government or the municipalities want to increase reading in the land, let them enter the market with block grants just as they do when they buy school buildings, pay teachers, award scholarships. And will no one please say that if the public pays taxes, it should read books for free. If so, why only books? Why not concert seats as well? If they want Humphrey Lyttelton in the local park on a bank holiday, they know they have to pay him and his band the full fee. If they want thousands of books, they blackmail the book trade into giving them for what amounts to nothing. As for the noble notion that books should be lent free because they're of cultural importance, please take a look round the shelves one day and examine which books are borrowed most: 80 per cent of them are frank entertainment—well, good luck, but this should be paid for as any other entertainment is.

For the majority of serious books that people do need for self-education—that is, works now out of copyright—there's no problem; and there can be little objection to their being loaned if publishers are agreeable. But when it comes to new copyright books—the best of which should certainly form a part of contemporary education too—the situation is quite otherwise. To produce these, the publishers and no one else (save, of course, for the unfortunate writer) are taking considerable risks. For these they should be repaid. And readers generally—especially young ones—will be attracted, rightly, by what has prestige and what is difficult to get, and repelled by anything offered them casually on a plate. People respect what they have to make a personal sacrifice to get.

THERE ARE CERTAINLY "answers," and in detail, to all or any of the arguments I've advanced—if the situation is considered within its present context. But to make these "answers" is a complete waste of time. It is the situation as a whole that must be considered, and the context altered. The essential fact is this: on its voyage from writer's brain to reader's, the bookshop is the place where book and public should connect; and now fail pitifully to do so.

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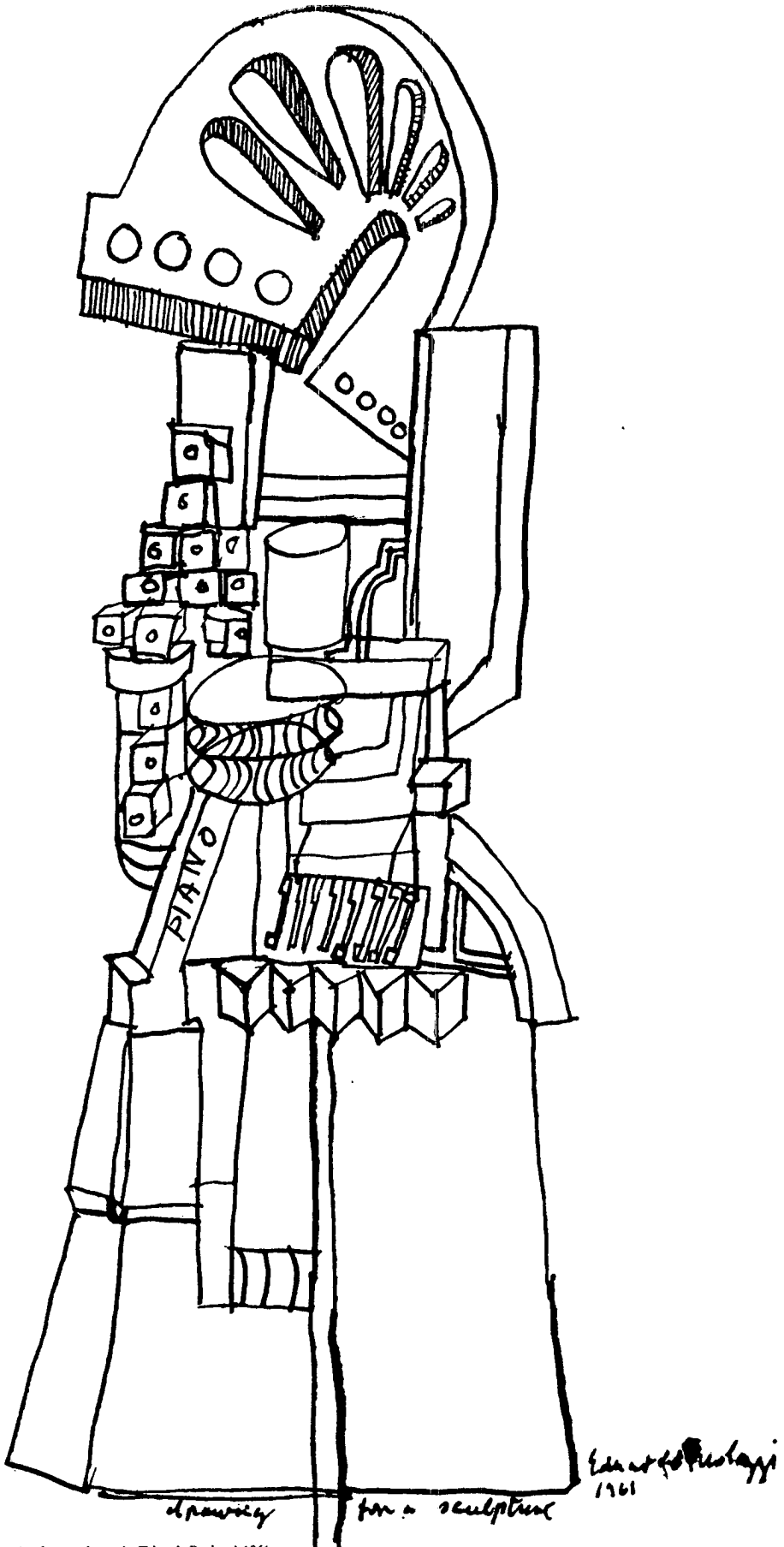

Drawing for a sculpture by Eduardo Paolozzi 1961

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D. J. Enright

The White Man's Burden

Thoughts from Asia

I REMEMBER some years ago a reader's letter in a British newspaper, which started off quite feasibly by deploring our interference in Asian ways of life. The letter turned into an impassioned plea that we should not attempt to persuade these Asians into eating solid British food, such as beef, because they were already tough enough and too numerous, and with beef inside them we Europeans might as well give up the unequal struggle.

These notes are chiefly concerned with the beef we are currently supplying to Asia, in the form of "foreign aid" of various types. My title refers to the British abroad—the butcher's boy who delivers the beef, who sometimes gets a tip from the householder, and sometimes a kick because it isn't quite the joint he ordered or because this way the householder can eat his beef and have his pride.

ONE ASPECT of the burden, most commonly experienced in ex-colonies—to be thanked in private for one's services, while being told that of course one understands that one cannot be thanked in public, because such would be used as ammunition by the enemies of the State. One understands, of course. Though sometimes one wonders whether not being thanked in public need be carried as far as being beaten up verbally in public. The voters—all those nice friendly people you keep on meeting—are they really going to reach for hammers and sickles unless some expatriate is slapped down at regular intervals?

But one still understands.

The sins of the fathers who mouthed the clichés of Empire shall be visited upon the children when they mouth the clichés of liberty, equality, fraternity, and cultural freedom.

What the white man must realise is that when he enters an ex-colony—and perhaps even a country which has always been "free"—he enters it bearing a load of original sin. He is in a state of disgrace, of indeterminate criminality. Let him remember this, and not be too dismayed when he finds that, despite his good will and impeccable intentions, he is not getting "equal treatment." He isn't equal, and that's that. (In some respects, one must add, he is probably doing much better than he would as an equal.)

Some white men consider abasement—preferably not quite of *oneself*—the best way of coping with this problem. Advisers from the democratic countries are very apt to decide, early in the proceedings, that "Of course this country isn't ready for democracy yet"—a comfortable decision, especially when it chimes with the opinion of the régime. It is particularly disturbing to observe the sort of "advice" and "help" offered by some Western cultural and

D. J. ENRIGHT, *poet and critic, is teaching at the University of Malaya in Singapore. His previous contribution to* ENCOUNTER, *"Empire of the English Tongue," appeared in December, 1958.*

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educational agencies—agencies made up of people who are supposed to know what freedom really is, but who choose to play for safety (as they conceive it) rather than work for truth. There is no boot-licker like an imported one.

Then there are the diplomats, whose day-to-day work is—fair enough—chiefly the avoiding of giving offence. Maybe there was a day when to send for one's Consul struck fear into the hearts of the natives. My advice to white men is: *Don't try it now!* Your Consul will probably bully the authorities into doubling or trebling whatever penalty they were thinking of imposing.... In this way white diplomats hope to decrease the amount of original sin under which they labour, by showing how they at least realise that the white man is not only inferior to the Asian but by definition a thief, drunk, pervert, or fellow-traveller.

This doesn't usually cut much ice, alas, since Asians (like everybody else, and they generally are like everybody else) respect people who stand up to them. The others may be thanked in public, but they will be despised in private. And a lot of real political business goes on in private.

"But, good Lord!" a sophisticated Pakistani said to me on one such occasion, "I thought the British would surely hang together...."

Abroad, I told him, we hang separately.

On "going native" as a policy. (In Japan the idiom is "to go bamboo"; in French, *"être tatamisé,"* after *tatami*, the rice-matting.) Oddly enough, Asians are rarely taken with foreigners who do this; they feel that foreigners should be what they are supposed to be. One hears the phrases "very Anglicised" and "one of us, really" used as high praise by resident Britishers, for instance in Japan and Thailand. But I never heard a Japanese (or, I think, a Thai) praise a Britisher for being "one of us." The Japanese in particular like their Englishmen to be English. Their attitude to the *tatamisé* has something in common with that of the old Anglo-Indians to the "babu."

A young Englishman, nominated for a post in a Japanese university, was turned down despite relevant qualifications and experience. One explanation of this, on the English side, was simple enough: the candidate had disqualified himself by marrying a Japanese girl; in the eyes of the Japanese, this sapped the authority with which he could expound English literature, it marred his authenticity.

A Japanese girl can look attractive in Western dress, so can an Indian. A Western woman in a kimono almost invariably looks like a sexual pervert of some kind; in a sari, as if she were going to a fancy dress ball or to bed with a client of rather specialised tastes. Easterners are much better at being Western than Westerners are at being Eastern. Why? What does this imply? That Old Europe has stiffened our spiritual joints and hardened our arteries past repair? That young people can play at being old people more convincingly than old people can play at being young people? One of the most striking characteristics of the East is the appetite for information, of all sorts, the sheer and sometimes comic curiosity. In the West the desire for knowledge is now accompanied with fear, or at the very least by an irony, a scepticism, which is hardly known in the East. We are not sure we really want to learn much more.

And it is true, I think, that Westerners are more acute critics of the East than Easterners are of the West. I still feel that our objections to their reactionary spirituality and callous æstheticism have been more to the point, and perhaps less disingenuous, than their attacks on our blind materialism. In defending Koestler's *The Lotus and the Robot* recently, an Indian writes, "It is the foreigner only who can put his finger in the correct places; the proud national just cannot examine his heritage." The proud national of Europe has had good cause before now to examine *his* heritage, and good reason to modify his pride.

The main thesis of *The Ugly American* is that State Department officials should speak the language of the country to which they are posted. As the Russians do. (The only Russian officials I have met in the East were busily learning English. But perhaps they were about to be transferred to America.)

This sounds a very reasonable proposition. Though, by present practice, diplomats shift round fairly frequently, and there is a limit to the number of languages a man can learn and still retain a degree of sanity. The point of speaking the language of the country, with (I should imagine) a good grasp of its subtleties, is that this gratifies the important listener and makes him more likely to conform to the advice offered. I haven't seen much evidence of the

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truth of this. It is the case that ambassadors attract attention periodically by giving speeches or press conferences in the language of the country. In view of what they sometimes say, it seems a doubtful blessing that they should attract attention at all. There is still much to be said for a tactful interpreter, with a sense of what is owed to his two *raisons d'être*.

But the authors of *The Ugly American* carry the argument a step further. In countries where palmistry is believed in, the diplomat should learn the art of reading palms. Then, when the opportunity presents itself (and one assumes the man has a better *entrée* or more initiative than Artemidorus), he can conveniently descry in the lines of the King's hand or the Prime Minister's hand or the Field Marshal's hand the line which his country is currently requiring him to promote. Presumably, if the country is one in which human sacrifice is believed in, then....

The Ugly American caused considerable distress in American diplomatic and quasi-diplomatic circles; one still hears it being denounced at cocktail parties. But to call its authors "traitors" is to miss the point entirely. The book was written—at least this is my theory—by a hard-headed pressure group in the State Department, men who want their money's worth and a bit extra if possible. It does not question the principle of foreign aid, the spirit in which aid is given and taken. It does not question the principle that one is justified in intervening in another country's affairs, as a means to an end which may never affect the inhabitants of that country or perhaps affect them painfully. It questions no principle at all: its sub-title could well be, "How to make your (white) lies stick."

It is significant that the title really refers to the book's hero, the good man. A very acceptable book, really; and no doubt the film will be even more acceptable.

As I write this, I note that one of the authors, now Far East correspondent for *Reader's Digest,* has just flown into Kuala Lumpur. He is particularly interested in the rural development plans of Malaya.

The simple fact—and we might as well be simple once in a while—is that much of our work in the East is vitiated from the start. How many of us care what happens to the inhabitants of these foreign parts? We are in the job because of the easier living—agreed, mosquitoes and dysentery; but no bus queues, no washing up!—and which are the nobler distresses? Or, more seriously, because in these foreign countries is being fought the war which we hope won't be fought in our own. We are trying to build a Chinese Wall with human beings. And the fact shows. And we shan't be successful, because of the fact.

A milch-cow is a nice thing to have around, but no one is going to risk his life saving it from the wolves.

Not that I ever featured as a dispenser of foreign aid, except of the poor-white variety—culture. And then only until my employers found out that I wrote books.

What does Britain's prestige abroad rest on? On three things, one of which is equivocal and another shaky. First, our civilised way of sloughing our empire. This has left us in good odour in India (which in any case cannot afford to spend energy on recriminations), but not always elsewhere, not in ex-colonies where the new leaders are further exasperated by their lack of ferocious imperialist-inflicted wounds to display in the market-place. Secondly, our political stability. But this won't impress for long; unless it is accompanied with economic stability it will soon look more like moribundity. Thirdly, our art, more particularly our literature—that long and varied canon of poetry and prose which even the most zealous national-culturists (with their natural prejudice in favour of the *Ramayana* or didactic sequences or *haiku* or *pantun* or Tagore or *englynion*) have to admit is really on the ball. It is only natural non-writers in the colonies and ex-colonies who believe that the study of English literature has prevented them from being great writers.

The other people in the East who distrust English literature—or, rather, literature, for they do have the virtue of not splitting literature into watertight national compartments—are British business men, for whom it is largely a waste of time and no help to their local employees ("Can't write a decent straightforward business letter!"), and diplomats, who perceive that literature rarely fits in unambiguously and for long with their current preoccupations and duties.

It appears that Embassies bear a healthy mistrust of writers, especially live ones. I have this on the highest authority—that of a British Council Representative in South-East Asia, whose own mistrust was so highly developed as

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to be almost unhealthy. (His idea was that all English writers should be confined to Europe, where they couldn't do any harm. The idea of his opposite numbers in Europe seems to be that English writers should be sent to the East, where they can't do any harm.) It was this gentleman who had to postpone his talk on "Food and Drink in Britain" because the date was found to be inappropriate—a Buddhist festival. Mustn't have the butcher's boy calling round on that day.

It sometimes seems sad that British agencies abroad do not push English literature more enthusiastically, considering how much goodwill there is towards it. On the other hand, it would probably seem sadder if they did push it, considering the motives of the probable pushers. If the main function of a cultural agency is to publicise its country's way of life, and its country's way of life is built on a belief in freedom, what can its agents possibly be doing in a country which (they tell you) is simply not ready for freedom? If we have to go down, then let us go down with our flags flying—not with our literature being used as a substitute for a thriving economy or a really big Bomb or a Third Secretary.

SOME little time ago I found myself involved in a rather unseemly brawl with the Singapore Government, the socialist anti-colonialist People's Action Party. This arose out of some commonplace remarks I passed in the course of a lecture, concerning the freedom of the artist, the vanity of governmental intervention in the arts, and the dangers attendant on cultural paternalism. At heart the incident was, I suppose, one of those anti-colonialist demonstrations required from time to time by political etiquette. Engrossed in my inaugural lecture, I absent-mindedly walked in front of guns that were trained on bigger game than me. ("I could have understood him making remarks like that if he were Professor of Anthropology," a Person of Prime Importance is reported to have said, "but he's supposed to be Professor of English!" Which tells us something hurtful, if not new, about the relative standing of these two studies; for one thing, that Literature isn't supposed to have anything to do with Life.)

The results—as I had predicted in the short time before being placed under mouth arrest—were embarrassing to all. Before long the soft pedal was assiduously pressed (chiefly in private). Compliments floated backwards and forwards (chiefly in private), for no one's heart was really in the fight. Finally there was only one man left to defend the Government's action with any conviction; he even defended it against supporters of the Government. Typically, a British diplomat. As ever, several weeks behind the times.

TO THE poor oppressed white burden-bearers of Asia, Japan appears as the Islands of the Blessed. The land where young people will come up to you in the street and ask eagerly whether you are English, or French, or whatever, instead of nervously crossing over to the other side. (Though admittedly it's a little different with *very* young people, who tend to gasp *"Amerika-jin!"* and then burst into terrified sobbing.)

Japan was never colonised, of course, only defeated, and by brute force. More to the point, Japan is keenly interested in everything from the West; and the Japanese are in general a courteous people, so good manners loom larger than truth. Moreover, the relationship between one Japanese and another is so riddled with complexities that a relationship with a foreigner comes as a positive relief. You may not know quite how to treat a foreigner—but then it seems you don't have to treat him in any particular way. He begs you to be informal, he is overcome with gratitude if you are rude.... Hence perhaps the appallingly intimate confessions which come a foreigner's way in Japan. Like a priest, but more so, he "doesn't count."

In company a foreigner is a valuable reliever of social strain, the cataclyst which turns acids to milk and honey and a good laugh. I occasionally found myself interpreting between two Japanese, interpreting each to the other, though in fact they were comparative strangers to me and well known to each other. I was bringing mutual understanding to them. This experience tends to go to the head of foreigners: they begin to think themselves in possession of some great enigmatic truth. They should bear in mind that, like most of us, the Japanese are only enigmatic in company. And that people who "don't count" very often do not, in fact, count for much.

IT IS HARD to realise how much things have changed in the last ten or fifteen years. To confine ourselves to the life academic, the truly civilised world, beyond nationality, outside politics, where truth is pursued for its own

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sake, where learning is sought, if not quite for its own sake, then at least for purposes which are not defined and de-limited in advance—to confine ourselves to this world: how many of us who count ourselves of this world know what is being done in our name (and indeed "for our own good")?

It used to seem to me that one unequivocally good thing that the Western powers did by way of "foreign aid" was the various scholarship schemes whereby young people and not so young people were brought over to study in European and American universities. There, one felt, a few strong and lasting links were being forged between nation and nation. Yes, that was the trouble—the links may have been lasting but they were not immediate enough. So awards began to be made more in accordance with the "needs" of the local régime than with the abilities and promise of the candidates.

In a number of countries these foreign scholarships, made available without strings, are then administered by a department of the local government, who attach somewhat repressive conditions to the awards. The selected candidate may have to sign an agreement binding himself to serve his government for a minimum period of five years after his return —even though he has been abroad for only one year. Guarantors have to be found who will contract to refund to the local government the whole amount expended on the scholar, should he default by rendering himself in any way unable to serve the government—even though the money in question has all come from abroad. There is no question of the scholar "finding himself," of developing a new talent: he must do what he has been sent to do, and when his time is up he must return to his government department.

THE ARGUMENT IS, of course, that the scheme is intended to train servants for the new or underdeveloped countries, and—such is human nature —these trainees might never return to their homeland, might even—oh, disaster!—marry abroad, were such penalties not invoked. (Yes, better in the long run if we just ban human nature.) As for "love of truth," "the disinterested pursuit of knowledge," and so forth —that was all very well once upon a time, but we can't afford sentimentality in these days of crisis and so on....

But surely he who pays the piper can properly expect to have some say in the tune? And surely it would be good—I mean, good tactics—to remember that to-day's government won't last for ever and that tomorrow's government will be made up of to-day's students?

Does it work, this efficient scheme I have described? I do not think so. The students feel that the wealthy countries who offer the scholarships don't care a damn for them or their ambitions—it's all politics. This feeling may not inhibit them from accepting an award, but it can spoil the scholarship from the start. The scheme does not sow the seeds of good will and peace on earth—or of much else except cynicism, opportunism, ingratitude, and resentment.

As I say, those offered scholarships abroad will generally take them, nonetheless. Because in a queer way it has become something of a disgrace *not* to have spent a period of study abroad. A shy Thai girl, a university assistant, told me how embarrassed she was because "people stop me in the street and say: Haven't you gone abroad *yet*?" True, so many have gone abroad that it is supposed there must be something very fishy about those who haven't, politically or socially or sexually....Yet this girl was only twenty-four—and actually rather reluctant to leave home. However, I am glad to say that she has since done an M.A. at Columbia and thus made herself respectable.

How exciting the idea of foreign scholarships seemed when I was her age! And now, how mechanical, how taken for granted, how loveless, the whole business has become!

IF THE colonial régimes have had an adverse effect on the development of local literatures, I am persuaded this is not because English literature was taught, but because it wasn't taught—or was taught fantastically wrongly. More likely the colonialists succeeded in infecting the natives with their own innate contempt for the arts. The ex-colonies are certainly adept in bureaucracy and sophisticated enough in economic theory and keen enough on cars—all *that* "travelled" smoothly.

In some of the smaller Asian countries, whether colonised or not, it seems as if people have learned how to read just at the moment when their educational structure leaves them no time to read—they have stepped straight into the "other culture"; the busy world of technology and economics. Just at the moment,

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moreover, when the cinema leaves them with no *need* to read. "If we want to read the great book, *War and Peace*, we will spend two or three weeks to finish it, but we can finish it through the film within three or four hours and it will remain in our minds deeply." That, from a Singapore student, a Chinese educated in Chinese, is pretty staggering, considering the traditional Chinese respect for the written word. More surprising than the Thai student's complaint, in an essay on the appreciation of poetry, that "When I read poetry my head soon becomes hurting."

Is reading on the way out? Not so in Japan, where it even evinces itself as a vice, or at least a disease. "Live!—our illiterates will do that for us." And there are not many illiterates in Japan. All those raised papers and magazines and books in the electric train—are they to cut off the view of old and pregnant and sick women left to sway in the aisle? One sometimes wonders. But obviously this isn't the whole story. The Japanese are an insatiably inquisitive and unquiet people: born readers and born writers. Their heads do not hurt when they read poetry. The country must support more magazines than any European country—I suspect it supports more writers too.

In some of the new countries, the slogan would rather be, "Read!—our teachers can do that for us, while we go to the cinema." (And it is amusing to note that those who are most vocal about the corrupting influence of films—sex, violence, race, robbery, "glorification of colonialism" and fantasy—are also the cinema's most devoted patrons. But of course they go there to learn about history—*Solomon and Sheba*—or about geography—*Peyton Place*....) The lot of the writer in these countries is bound to be hard, financially and in other ways. There is a definite official demand for writing, though there may be little public (if you like, private) demand for the commodity. The theory has it that writing can foster a "national consciousness." But which comes first, the hen or the egg? Judging by the harassed look on the faces of the writers, the china egg placed under them is so far failing to have the desired effect. Can it be that they are up against a task which only time and patience and effort—and freedom—can accomplish? (Or, of course, a highly organised and heavily staffed Thought Police.) Let us assume that "national consciousness" is a good and necessary thing: for instance, in helping to keep peace in a multi-racial society, a job which at present is left to ordinary education, such accidents as inter-marriage and daily contacts, and the riot squad. Let us assume, further, that, in the modern world it is a possible thing. Then it is still something which is formed, in time, by the successive thoughts and acts of individuals. There are still some things —however urgent they may be felt to be—which the best-intentioned Ministry cannot do.

Again I am mouthing clichés. But the sad truth is that in some Asian countries the old liberal humanist commonplaces are not commonplaces at all. They are not clichés in Japan —because of pre-War repression and because of some tenacious and inhumane traditions. They are not clichés in some of our ex-colonies, because, though we taught them much, these clichés represent "skills" we did not pass on. Perhaps we found them "unsuitable"—it seems we still do.

"All nations are untidy sights," says one of our poets who should know. "Untidiness" in Asia, however inconvenient it may prove at times (and I have grumbled a good deal in these notes), is something we should not repine at too much. It is a concomitant of liveliness. What alarms me is the desire—and what is especially disturbing is the desire of outsiders—to impose on Asian countries, in the name of Crisis, a prefabricated tidiness. Too much law, too much order, too much authority, too much obedience—these are not bulwarks against Communism. They are, I suspect, something of an invitation.

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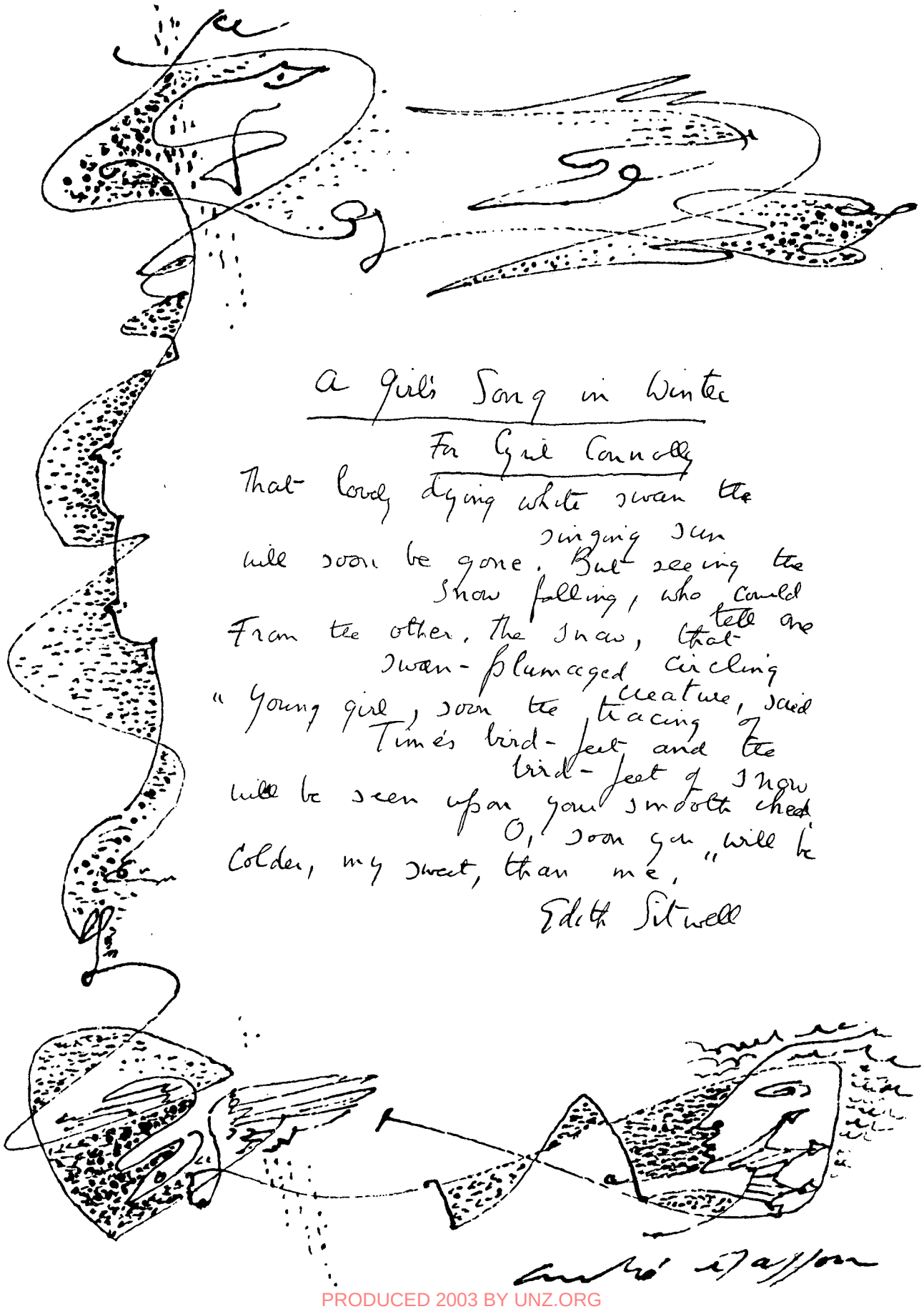

A Girl's Song in Winter

For Cyril Connolly

That lovely dying white swan the
singing sun
will soon be gone. But seeing the
snow falling, who could
From the other, the snow, that
tell me
swan-plumaged circling
"Young girl, soon the creature, said
Time's bird-feet and the
tracing of
bird-feet of snow
will be seen upon your smooth cheek
O, soon you will be
Colder, my sweet, than me,"

Edith Sitwell

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Reynolds Price

Uncle Grant

A Memory and Some Jokes

SUPPOSING he could know. Supposing I was not three thousand miles from north-east North Carolina and supposing he had not been dead six years—then he would be happy, knowing I have thought of him all this week. Supposing though he was alive and I was still here—in Oxford whose light and colour and trees and even grass would be strange to him as the moon (as they are to me)—and supposing he heard I had thought of him. It would go more or less like this. He would be in my aunt's kitchen in a straight black chair near the stove, having finished his breakfast. My aunt would have finished before he started and by then be spreading up beds or sweeping the porch, in her nightdress still. So he would be alone—his natural way. His back would be straight as the chair, but his body would lean to the left, resting. The way he rested was to press his left elbow on the table beside him (an apple-green table with red oilcloth for a cover) and then lay his head, his *face*, in his hand. His long right arm would lie on his bony flank, the fingers hinged over the knee, and his legs would be clasped, uncrossed not to wrinkle the starched khaki trousers and ending in high-top shoes that, winter or summer, would be slashed into airy patterns, clean as the day they were bought, just ventilated with a razor blade. His white suspenders would rise from his waist to his shoulders, crossing the starched grey shirt (never with a tie but always buttoned at the neck and when he was dressed, pinned with a dull gold bar), but his face would be covered, his eyes. Only the shape of his skull would be clear—narrow and long, pointed at the chin, domed at the top, and the colour of the skin that covered it—the colour of a penny polished down by years of spending thumbs till Lincoln's face is a shadow but with red life running beneath. That way he would be resting, and when my aunt came in with a letter he would rest on till she said, "Uncle Grant. Here's a letter from Reynolds." He would look up squinting while she read out something like, "Tell Uncle Grant I am thinking of him this week," but before she could read any more, he would slap his flank and spring to his feet, rocking in his lace-work shoes and flicking at his ears with his hands—"Great God A-mighty! Where *is* Reynolds?" When she said "England" he would say, "Over yonder with them Hitalians and he been thinking about Grant? Great God A-mighty!" and then trail off into laughing and then for a long time to come, into smiling. He would be happy that whole day, and it is a fact—there is no one alive or dead I could have made happier with eight or ten words.

But he is dead and the reason I have thought of him these few days is strange—not because I remembered some joke on him and certainly not from seeing his likeness in the blue-black Negroes of the Oxford streets but because I went in a store to buy postcards and saw a card from the Berlin Museum—on a black background an Egyptian head, the tall narrow skull rocked back on the scrawny neck, the chin offered out like a flickering tongue, the waving lips set in above (separate as if they were carved by a better man), the ears with their heavy

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lobes pinned close to the skull, and the black-rimmed sockets holding no eyes at all. I turned the card over. The head was Amenhotep IV, pharaoh of Egypt in the eighteenth dynasty who cancelled the worship of bestial gods and changed his name to Akhnaton, "it pleases Aton," the one true god, the streaming disc, the sun. I bought the card and stepped in the High and walked ten yards and said to myself what I suddenly knew, "It's the one picture left of Uncle Grant."

HIS FULL NAME as far as we knew was Grant Terry, and he said he was born near Chatham, Virginia. He never knew his age but in 1940 when he heard of Old Age Assistance and wanted it (you had to have proof you were sixty-five), my father took him to a doctor who said, "I'll certify him—sure—but if those Welfare Workers took a look at his eyes, they wouldn't need *my* guarantee. He's well past seventy." So assuming he was seventy-five in 1940, that would make him born around 1865—born into freedom, maybe even named for a general his parents heard of who set them free. Of his youth we knew practically nothing—there was nothing he could have done but farm or work in a sawmill or gin cotton. We did know he had a wife named Ruth who gave him a son named Felix. It is the one thing I recall him telling me from his past (and he told me more than once, never with tears and sometimes with laughing at the end)—"When I left my home in Virginia to come down here, I said to Ruth and my boy, 'I'll see you in Heaven if I don't come back.' " And he never went back.

He came south eighty miles to North Carolina. He told my father he came in a road gang hired to pave the Raleigh streets, but he never said when he came—not to anybody still alive. He never said why he came to Macon either. (The streets of Macon are still not paved.) Maybe he had done his Raleigh work and meant to head back to Ruth and Felix but never got farther than sixty miles, stopping in Macon, population two hundred, in Warren County which touches the Virginia line. Or maybe he came to Macon with a railroad gang. (That seems a fair guess. He always called Macon a "seaport town." It was more than a hundred miles from the sea. What he meant was Seaboard Railway—the Norfolk-to-Raleigh tracks split Macon.) Anyhow, he was there by the time I was born in 1933 though he wasn't attached to us, and his work was growing things. He planted people's flowers and tended lawns—what lawns there were where oak shade and white sand soil discouraged grass—and then he began tending me.

Not that I needed much tending. My mother was there and my aunt down the road, but sometimes in the evening my parents went visiting or to a picture show (not often, it being the deep Depression), and then Uncle Grant would sit by me while I slept. I don't know why they selected him, *trusted* him, when my aunt could have kept me. Maybe they thought he could make me grow. (When he first came to Macon and asked for work and somebody said, "What can you do?" he said, "I can make things grow" so they gave him a chance, and he proved it the rest of his life—till my father could say, "Uncle Grant could stick a Coca-Cola bottle in the ground and raise you an ice-cold drink by sun-up to-morrow." And I needed growing—I had convulsions till I was four, sudden blue twitching rigors that rushed me unconscious into sight of death every three or four months.) The best reason though would be that, having no friends of his own, he had taken to me, and there is a joke which seems to show that. One evening when I was nearly two my parents left me with him, saying they would be back late. But they came back sooner than they expected, and when they drove up under the trees, instead of the house being dark and quiet, there was light streaming from my bedroom and mouth-harp music and laughing enough for a party. In surprise they crept to the porch and peeped in. My high-railed iron bed was by the window, and I was in it in outing pyjamas but not lying down—facing Uncle Grant who was standing on the floor playing harp music while I danced in time and laughed. Then he knocked out the

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spit and passed the harp to me, and I blew what I could while he clapped hands. And then they stopped it—not being angry but saying I had better calm down and maybe Uncle Grant shouldn't pass the harp to me in case of germs (I had already caught gingivitis from chewing a brass door-knob) —and that was our first joke on him.

IT WENT ON like that another year—him working the yard off and on and staying with me odd evenings—and then my father changed jobs (*got* a job after six years of failing to sell insurance to wiped-out farmers) and we left Macon, going west a hundred miles to Asheboro where we lived in a small apartment. Uncle Grant stayed on in Macon—he still wasn't ours and we had no lawn of our own, no room for him—but before long my father sent bus fare to my aunt and asked her to put Uncle Grant on the bus (Uncle Grant couldn't read), and soon he arrived for his first visit. He spent the nights in a Negro boarding-house and the days and evenings in our kitchen. There was nothing he could do to help except wash dishes, but help wasn't what my father wanted. He wanted just to talk and every evening after supper he stayed in the kitchen and talked to Uncle Grant till almost time to sleep. I was too young then to listen—or if I listened, to remember the things they said. They laughed a good deal though—I remember that—and the rest of the time they talked about the past. My mother says they did but *she* didn't listen, and now they are dead and nobody knows why they sat there night after night at a hard kitchen table under a bare light bulb, talking on and on, and laughing. Unless they loved each other—meaning there would come times when they needed to meet, and they never explained the need to themselves. My father would just send bus fare through my aunt or there would be a letter from her saying Uncle Grant was ready for a visit and had asked her to say he was coming, and we would go meet the bus, my father and I—five or six times in the two years we lived in three small rooms.

Then we bought two acres of land in the country near Asheboro and built a house. Or began to. The land needed clearing first —of loblolly pines and blackjack oaks and redbugs and snakes—so Uncle Grant came and spent the week-days supervising that. He spent the nights at the same boarding-house and as far as we knew went nowhere and had no Negro friends, but he spent his Sundays with us. We would pick him up in the car after church—my father and I—and drive out to look at our land. He would tell us what trees had gone that week and beg our pardon for, say, sacrificing a dogwood that had stood in the carpenters' path. But what I remember about those mornings—I was five—are two things he did which changed my mind. One Sunday when the clearing had just begun, the three of us were walking around the land—I in shorts and what I called Jesus-sandals—and as we came to a pile of limbs and weeds, six feet of black snake streamed out. It was May and black snakes go crazy in May so he headed for me and reared on his tail to fight. My father and I were locked stiff in surprise, but before the snake could lash at me, Uncle Grant took one step sideways like lightning and grabbed the snake's tail and cracked him on the air like a leather whip. Then we all breathed deep and looked and laughed at two yards of limp dead snake in Uncle Grant's hand. The way that changed my mind was to make me see Uncle Grant, not as the nurse who sat with me nights but as something fearless and mysterious to imitate, and I never saw him in the old tame way again, not for eight or nine years. Then another Sunday morning we were walking—the land was clear by this time, but there wasn't a blade of grass, only thousands of rocks that looked identical to me—and Uncle Grant leaned down quick as he had for the snake and came up with a little rock and handed it to me. It was a perfect Indian arrowhead, and in my joy I said, "How in the world did you see it?" and he said, "I'm three parts Indian myself," which deepened the feeling I had had for him since the snake and also made our two rocky acres something grand—a hunting-ground of the Occonee-

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chees or even a battlefield (though we never found a second head to prove it).

WHEN THE HOUSE was finished and we moved in, he came with us. There was one small room off the kitchen where the furnace was, and his bed was there and a little low table to carry the things he owned—in the daytime, his shaving equipment and his extra shirt, and at night, his precious belongings—an Ingersoll watch and a pocket knife. In the daytime he worked to grow us a lawn, and gradually, single-handed, he grew us a beauty. And once it was strong, he began to cut it—with a small hand-sickle and his pocket knife. We had a lawn mower and he tried to use it but stopped, saying rocks were too plentiful still—the real reason being he could cut grass better, cut it *right*, by hand, and if that meant bending to the ground all day at age about seventy-five and trimming two acres with a three-inch blade, then that was all right. It was what he could do, in spring and summer. In the fall he raked leaves, not waiting till the trees were bare but raking all day every day. It was one of our jokes on him (a true joke—they were all true) that we once saw him run a few yards and catch a dead leaf as it fell, in the air, and grind it to dust. In the evening after us he ate at the kitchen counter and washed our dishes and then went to his room and sat on his bed and looked at picture magazines. Sometimes my father would sit with him and I would fly in and out, but mostly he sat in silence, thinking whatever his private thoughts were, till we gave him a radio.

That was Christmas 1939 and there wasn't much to hear except black war news, but nothing we gave him ever pleased him more. Not that he had seemed unhappy before—I don't think he thought about happiness—but now he would sit there on into the night. I would sit beside him as long as my mother allowed in the dark (the only light was the radio dial), hearing our favourite things which were short-wave programmes in German and Spanish with Morse code bursting in like machine-gun fire to make us laugh. We didn't understand a word and my father would step to the door and shake his head at us in the dark, but Uncle Grant would slap his thigh and say, "*Listen* to them Hitalians, Mr. Will! Great God A-mighty! Yippity-yippity-yippity all night long!" *Hitalians* was what he called all foreigners, and "Great God A-mighty" was his favourite excited expression, the one he used every time some Spaniard would speed up the news so before long I was saying it too—age six. At first I just said it with him when he laughed, but once I said it in front of my mother, and she asked him not to curse around me and made me stay out of his room for a while. With me being punished my father filled the gap by spending more time in the furnace room, and it was then the jokes piled up. Despite all the war news, he would have a new joke every evening—my father, that is, on Uncle Grant. One night for instance after they had sat an hour listening, they switched off the radio to talk. They talked quite a while till my father said, "Let's switch it on. It's time for the midnight news" so they did, and when it had finished Uncle Grant said, "When does they sleep, Mr. Will?" My father said "Who?" and he said—pointing through the dark to the radio—"Them little peoples in yonder." My father whose work was electrical supplies explained about waves in the air and Uncle Grant nodded. But some time later when they had sat up extra late, Uncle Grant asked if it wasn't bedtime. My father took the hint but was slow about leaving so Uncle Grant stood and unbuttoned his collar, then thought and switched off the radio. My father said, "How come you did that?" and he said, "I can't undress with them little peoples watching, Mr. Will." So my father never tried explaining again.

Then after three years we lost the house and all that grass and had to move to another apartment in Asheboro. By then I had a year-old brother named Bill so again there was no room for Uncle Grant and nothing for him to do if there had been, and my father explained it a month in advance—that much as we wanted him around, we couldn't

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keep paying him three dollars a week just to wash dishes and that if he stayed on in Asheboro he would have to find some place to sleep and hire-out to other people to pay his rent. He told my father he would think it over, and he thought that whole last month, asking no advice, sitting by himself most evenings as I was in school and busy and my father was ashamed in his presence, and giving no sign of his plans till the day we moved. He helped that day by packing china and watching how the movers treated our furniture, and when everything had gone except his few belongings, my father said, "Where are you going, Uncle Grant?" He said, "I'm sleeping in that boarding-house till I get you all's windows washed. Then I'm going to Macon on the bus. I ain't hiring-out in this town." (Asheboro was a stocking-mill town.) My father said, "You might break your radio on the bus. Wait till Sunday and I'll carry you." Uncle Grant said, "I been studying that—where am I going to plug in a radio in Macon? You keep it here and if I wants it, I'll let you know." My father said, "Maybe when I get a little money I can trade it in on a battery-set," and he said "Maybe you can" and two days later went to Macon by bus, saying he would stay with a Negro named Rommy Watson till he found a house. But somewhere in the hundred miles, for some reason, he changed his mind and when the bus set him down, he walked to my aunt's back-door and asked could he sleep in her old smokehouse till he found a place of his own? She knew of course why we turned him loose so she told him yes, and he swept it out and slept on an army cot, coming to her kitchen for meals but not eating well, not looking for a house of his own, not saying a word about work. My aunt finally asked him was he all right, and he said, "I will be soon as I get my bearings." In about two weeks he came in to breakfast with the cot rolled under his arm and his bag of belongings. When he had eaten he said he had found a house at the far end of Macon—a one-room house under oak trees in the yard of a Negro church. Then he left and was gone all day, all night, but my aunt looked out in the morning and there he was, trimming her bushes, having got some sort of bearings—enough to last two years anyhow.

WE HAD TURNED him loose in 1942. He lived on thirteen years and he never let us take hold again. We stayed in Asheboro three years after he left, but he didn't come to visit in all that time. I don't know whether we asked him and if we did, what reason he gave for refusing. He just didn't come and he might have said he was too old. But he worked for my aunt every day, still trimming what he grew with his pocket knife, and the only way he showed age was by not taking supper in my aunt's kitchen. In summer he would stop about six, in winter about five—before dark—and put up his tools and come to the back door, and my aunt would give him cold biscuits and sometimes a little jar of syrup or preserves, and he would walk home a mile and a half and spend his evenings by a kerosene lamp, alone. But that was no change for him, being by himself.

What *was* a change was that after he had been back in Macon two years, he fell in some sort of love with a girl named Katie. She was not from Macon but had come there as cook to a cousin of ours who returned so she had no Negro friends either, and though she was no more than twenty, she began to sit with him some evenings. My aunt didn't know if they got beyond sitting, but she didn't worry much, not at first. Uncle Grant was pushing eighty and it seemed at first that Katie was good to him in ways that made him happy. My aunt *did* say to him once, "Uncle Grant, don't let that girl take your money away," and he said, "No'm. Every penny I lends her, she pay me back." But then it turned bad. After six months or so Katie began taking him to Warrenton on Saturdays (the county seat, five miles away), and they would drink fifty-cent wine called "Sneaky Pete," and every week he would have the few hairs shaved off his head (to hide them from Katie as they were white). For a while he

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managed to keep his drinking to Saturdays and to be cold-sober when he turned up for Sunday breakfast so my aunt didn't complain but finally he slipped. One Sunday he came in late—about nine—walking straight and dressed clean but old around the eyes and with his hat still on. He said "Good morning." My aunt said the same and, not really noticing, gave him a dish of corn flakes. He ate a few spoonfuls in silence. Then he sprang to the floor and slapped his flank and said, "What is the meaning of *this*?"—so loud she could smell the wine and pointing at his bowl. My aunt went over and there was a needle in his food. Thinking fast, she laughed and said, "Excuse me, Uncle Grant. I was sewing in here this week and somebody came to the door, and I stuck the needle in the cereal box, and it must have worked through." That was the truth and, sober, he would have known it, but he stood there rocking a little and then said, "Somebody trying to kill me is all *I* know." My aunt said, "If you are that big a fool, you can leave my house" so he stood another minute and then he left.

That was in late October—he had just started raking leaves. His shame kept him home the following day—and for two months to come. My aunt reckoned he would come back when he got hungry but he didn't. What food he got he bought from his neighbours or maybe Katie sneaked him things from our cousin's kitchen, but he didn't show up at my aunt's, and every leaf fell and thousands of acorns, and she finally hired boys to clear them. He still hadn't showed up by Christmas when we arrived for three days. That was the first we knew of his shame. My father said, "To be sure, he'll show up to see me," but my aunt said, "You are the *last* one he wants to see, feeling like he does," and my father saw she was right. We had brought him a box of Brown Mule chewing tobacco. He surely knew that and we waited but he didn't come. When we left on the 27th my father gave my aunt the Brown Mule and told her to save it till Uncle Grant showed up. She said in that case it would be bone-dry by the time he got it.

But for once she was wrong. About two weeks later in a hard cold spell his house burned down in the night from an overheated stove. My aunt heard that from her cook in the morning and heard that he got out unharmed with the clothes on his back so she packed a lard bucket with food and set our tobacco on top and sent it by the cook to where he was, which was at some neighbour's. The cook came back and said he thanked her and that afternoon he came. My aunt was nodding but the cook waked her and said, "Mr. Grant's out yonder on the porch, Miss Ida." She went and told him she was sorry to hear of his trouble and what was he going to do now? He said, "I don't hardly know but could I just sleep in the smokehouse till I get my bearings?" She thought and said, "Yes, if you'll stay there without having company." He knew who she meant and nodded and spent the rest of the day cleaning the smokehouse and getting the wood-stove fit to use.

He stayed there without having company, working on the yard by day and on the smokehouse by night. It was just one room, twice as tall as wide, with pine walls and floor. He scrubbed every board—cold as it was—and when they were dry, tacked newspapers around the walls high as he could reach to keep out wind. And as winter passed he kept finding things to do to that one room till it looked as if he took it to be his home. So when spring came my aunt hired a carpenter, and he put plasterboard on the walls and linoleum underfoot and a lock on the door. Then she took back the army cot and bought an old iron bed and a good felt mattress and gave Uncle Grant a key to the door, saying, "This is your key. I'll keep the spare one in case you lose it." But he never lost it and he lived on there, having got the bearings, somehow or other, that lasted the rest of his life.

WE MOVED BACK to Warren County in 1945. My father got a job that let him live in Warrenton, and we lived in a hotel apartment, but Sunday afternoons we would drive the five miles to Macon for

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supper with my aunt. When we got there we would sit an hour and talk, and then my father would rise and say he was stepping out back to see Uncle Grant and who wanted to come. That was a signal for me to say "Me," and for a year or so I said it and followed him to the smokehouse. Uncle Grant would have been waiting all afternoon, and talk would begin by him asking me about school and what I was doing. I was twelve and wasn't doing much but keeping a diary so my answers wouldn't take long, and he would turn to my father, and they would begin where they left off the week before in the circles of remembering and laughing. Old as I was, I still didn't listen, but soon as they got underway, I would stand and walk round the room, reading the papers on the walls till I knew them by heart. (What I *did* hear was, week after week, my father offering to take Uncle Grant on one of his Virginia business trips and detour to Chatham so he could look up Felix his son and Ruth his wife if she was alive. Uncle Grant would say, "Let me know when you fixing to go." But he never went. He rode with my father a number of times—down into South Carolina even—but whenever they set the date for a trip to Virginia and the date drew near, Uncle Grant would find yard work that couldn't wait or get sick a day or two with rheumatism.) But a year of such Sundays passed, and I slowed down on the smokehouse visits. My father would rise as before and ask who was going with him to Uncle Grant's, and more and more my brother volunteered, not me. He was going-on six, the age I had been when Uncle Grant cracked the snake and found me the arrowhead and we listened to Hitalian news together so he stepped into whatever place Uncle Grant kept for me and gradually filled more and more of it. But not all, never all, because every time my father came back from a visit he would say, "Uncle Grant asked after you. Step out yonder and speak to him, son." I would look up from what I was doing—seventh-grade arithmetic or a Hardy-Boys mystery—and say, "Soon as I finish this," and of course before I finished, it would be dark and supper would be ready. But I always saw him after supper when he came in to eat and to wash our dishes—little fidgety meetings with nothing to talk about but how he was feeling and with gaps of silence getting longer and longer till I would say "Good-bye" and he would say "All right" and I would hurry out. (Occasionally though, he would move some way that detained me—by dropping the dish-rag, say, and old as he was, stooping for it in a flash that recalled him reaching bare-handed for the snake to save me—and I would find things to say or look on a while at his slow body, seeing how grand he had been and knowing how happy I could make him, just waiting around.)

IT WENT ON like that till the summer of 1947. Then we moved again—sixty miles, to Raleigh, into a house with two good yards and a steam-heated basement room—and Uncle Grant followed in a day or two. He had not volunteered to follow, even when my father described the basement room and the grass and privet hedge that, since it was August, were nearly out of hand so my father asked him—"Would you come up and help us get straight?" and he said, "I'll ask Miss Ida can I take off a week." She gave him the week and we gave him the fare and he came. He started next morning at the ankle-high grass, and by sundown he had cut a patch about twenty feet square and sat in the kitchen, bolt-upright but too tired to eat. My father saw the trouble and saw a way out—he said, "I am driving to Clinton to-morrow. Come on and keep me company in this heat." Uncle Grant accepted, not mentioning grass. And none of us mentioned it again. When they got back from Clinton two evenings later, he spent one night, and the next day he went to Macon for good. Busy as my father was, he took Uncle Grant by car and spent a night at my aunt's. Then he came back to Raleigh and at supper that evening said, "He is older than I counted on him being. He won't last long. So I bought him a battery radio to keep him company."

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He was maybe eighty-two when he tackled our new lawn and lost. My father was forty-seven. Uncle Grant lasted eight years, working on my aunt's yard till eight months before he died (with nothing but a boy to rake up behind him), spending his evenings with nothing but his battery radio, complaining of nothing but sometimes numb feet, asking for nothing but Brown Mule tobacco (and getting that whenever we visited, especially at Christmas). My father lasted six.

He died in February, 1954—my father. Cancer of the lung with tumours the size of bird eggs clustered in his throat which nobody noticed till he thought he had bronchitis and called on a doctor. It went very quickly—twenty-one days—and my aunt didn't tell Uncle Grant till she had to. Hoping for the best, she had seen no reason to upset him in advance, but when we phoned her that Sunday night, she put on her coat and went to the smokehouse and knocked. Uncle Grant cracked the door and seeing it was her (she had never called on him after dark before), said, "What's wrong, Miss Ida?" She stood on the doorstep—half of a granite millstone—and said, "Will Price is dead." The heat of his room rushed past her into the dark, and directly he said, "Sit down, Miss Ida," pointing behind him to his single chair. She was my *mother's* sister but she stepped in and sat on his chair, and he sat on the edge of his mattress. Some radio music played on between them, and according to her, he never asked a question but waited. So when she got breath enough, she said the funeral was Tuesday and that he could ride down with her and her son. He thought and said, "Thank you, no'm. I better set here," and she went home to bed. In the morning after his breakfast, he stepped to her bedroom door and called her out and handed her three dollar bills to go towards flowers and she took them. He didn't work all that day or come in again for food so she sent his supper by the cook who reported he wasn't sick, but before she left Tuesday morning for Raleigh, he was stripping ivy off the light-ninged oak, too busy to do more than wave good-bye as the car rolled down to the road.

He just never mentioned my father, that was all—for his own reasons, never spoke my father's name in anybody's hearing again. My aunt came back from the funeral and gave him a full description, and he said, "It sounds mighty nice," and ever after that if she brought up the subject—remembering some joke of my father's for instance—he would listen and laugh a little if that was expected but at the first break, get up and leave the room. He went on speaking of others who were some way gone—Ruth his wife and Felix his son and once or twice even Katie—but never my father, not even the last time I saw him.

THAT WAS CHRISTMAS of 1954 and by then Uncle Grant was flat on his back in a Welfare Home near Warrenton, had been there nearly four months. Six months after my father's death, his feet and legs went back on him totally. He couldn't stand for more than ten minutes without going numb from his waist down, and one night he fell, going to the smokehouse from supper—on his soft grass—so he took to his bed, and when he didn't come to breakfast, my aunt went out and hearing of the fall, asked her doctor to come. He came and privately told her nothing was broken—it was poor circulation which would never improve, and didn't she want him to find Uncle Grant a place with nurses? There was nothing she could do but agree, being old herself, and the doctor found space in the house of a woman named Mary Powell who tended old Negroes for the Welfare Department. Then my aunt asked Uncle Grant if going there wasn't the wise thing for him—where he could rest with attention and regular meals and plenty of company and his radio, and where she could visit him Saturdays, headed for Warrenton? He thought and said "Yes'm, it is," and she bought him two suits of pyjamas and a flannel robe (he had always slept in long underwear), and they committed him early in September—her and her son—as the end of summer slammed down.

We didn't visit Macon in a body that

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Christmas. My mother wasn't up to it so we spent the day in Raleigh, but early on the 26th I drove to Macon to deliver our gift. I stayed with my aunt most of the day, and her children and grandchildren came in for dinner, but after the eating, things got quiet and people took pains not to speak of the past, and at four o'clock I said good-bye. My aunt followed me to the car and kissed me and said, "Aren't you going to stop by Mary Powell's and see Uncle Grant?" I looked at the sky to show it was late, and she said, "It won't take long and nobody God made will appreciate it more." So I stopped by and knocked on the holly-wreathed door and Mary Powell came. I said I would like to see Grant Terry, and she said, "Yes sir. Who is calling?" I smiled at that and said "Reynolds Price." —"Mr. Will Price's boy?"—"His oldest boy." She smiled too and said he was waiting for me and headed for a back bedroom. I paused at the door and she went ahead, flicking on the light, saying, "Mr. Grant, here's you a surprise." Then she walked out and I walked in, and the first thing I noticed was his neck. He was sitting up in bed in his clean pyjamas. They were buttoned to the top, but they had no collar and his neck was bare. That was the surprise. I had just never seen it before, not down to his shoulders, and the sight of it now—so lean and long but the skin drawn tight—surprised me. *He* was not surprised. He had known *some* Price would turn up at Christmas, and seeing it was me, he laughed, "Great God A-mighty, Reynolds, you bigger than me." (I was twenty-one. I had reached my full growth some time before, but he didn't say "*Mr.* Reynolds.") Then he pointed to a corner of the room where a two-foot plastic Christmas tree stood on a table, hung with a paper chain but no lights. There were two things under the tree on tissue paper—some bedroom shoes from my aunt and the box of Brown Mule my mother had mailed without telling me—and he said, "I thank you for my present," meaning the tobacco which he had not opened. I noticed when he laughed that his teeth were gone and remembered my aunt commenting on the strangeness of that—how his teeth had vanished since he took to his bed, just dissolved with nobody's help. So the Brown Mule was useless, like the shoes. He never stood up any more, he said. But that was the nearest he came to speaking of his health, and I didn't ask questions except to say did he have a radio? He said "Two" and pointed to his own battery-set on the far side of him and across the room to one by an empty bed. I asked whose that was and he said, "Freddy's. The nigger that sleeps yonder." I asked where was Freddy now and he said, "Spending some time with his family, thank God. All that ails him is his water." But before he explained Freddy's symptoms, Mary Powell returned with orange juice for both of us and a slice of fruitcake for me. Then she smoothed the sheets around Uncle Grant and said to him, "Tell Mr. Reynolds your New Year's resolution." He said, "What are you driving at?" So she told me —"Mr. Grant's getting baptised for New Year. He's been about to run me crazy to get him baptised—ain't you, Mr. Grant?" He didn't answer, didn't look at her or me but down at his hands on the sheet, and she went on—"Yes sir, he been running me *crazy* to get him baptised, old as he is, so I have arranged it for New Year's Day with my preacher. I got a big old trough in the back yard, and we are bringing that in the kitchen and spreading a clean sheet in it and filling it up with nice warm water, and *under* he's going—ain't you, Mr. Grant?" Still looking down, he said he would think it over. She said, "Well, of course you are and we wish Mr. Reynolds could be here to see it, don't we?" Then she took our glasses and left. When her steps had faded completely, he looked up at me and said, "I ain't going to be baptised in no hog trough." I said I was sure it wasn't a *hog* trough, but if he didn't want to be dipped, I saw no reason why he should. He said, "It ain't *me* that wants it. It's that woman. She come in here—last week, I believe—and asked me was I baptised and I said, 'No, not to my knowledge' so she said, 'Don't you know you can't get to

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Heaven and see your folks till you baptised?'" He waited a moment and asked me, "Is that the truth?" And straight off I said, "No. You'll see everybody you want to see, I'm sure. Give them best wishes from me!" He laughed, "I'll do that thing," then was quiet a moment, and not looking at me, said, "There *is* two or three I hope to meet, but I ain't studying the rest." Then he looked and said, "You're sure about that?—what you just now told me?" and again not waiting I said I was sure so he smiled, and I stepped to his window and looked out at what was almost night—"Uncle Grant, I better be heading home." He said "Thank you, sir" (not saying what for), and I stopped at the foot of his bed and asked what my father would have asked—"Is there any little thing I can do for you?" He said, "Not a thing." I said, "You are not still worried about being baptised, are you?" and he said, "No, you have eased my mind. I can tell that woman *my* mind is easy, and if she want to worry, that's *her* red wagon." I laid my hand on the ridge of sheet that was his right foot—"If you need anything, tell Aunt Ida, and she'll either get it or let us know." He said, "I won't need nothing." Then I stepped to the door and told him "Good-bye," and he said "Thank you" again (still not saying what for) and—grinning—that he would see me in Heaven if not any sooner. I grinned too and turned and made it to the door without being heard, and got in the car and started the sixty miles to Raleigh in full night alone, wondering part of the way, "Have I sent him to Hell with my theology?" but knowing that was just a joke and driving on, thinking gradually of my own business, not thinking of him at all, not working back to what he had been in previous days, feeling I had no reasons.

And went on till late last week—nearly seven years—not thinking of him more than, say, fifteen seconds at a stretch, not even when he died just before his afternoon nap, the May after I saw him in December. Freddy his room-mate told my aunt, "I was making another police-dog and he died"—Freddy made dogs to sell, out of socks and knitting wool—and she and her son handled the funeral. We didn't go, my part of the family (my mother had a job by then and I was deep in college exams and my brother was too young to drive), but my mother sent flowers, and they buried him at Mount Zion Church which he never attended, a mile from my aunt's, not in a Welfare coffin but in one she paid for, in a grave I have never seen.

Yet because of an accident—stopping to buy postcards—I have spent a week, three thousand miles from home, thinking mostly of him, working back to what he may have been, to what we knew anyhow, to what he *showed* (which must have been what he *was*), finding I knew a good deal, finding *reasons*, and thinking how happy he would be if he could know, how long he would laugh, rocking in his lace-work shoes, if he heard what reminded me of him (a Hitalian face on a card—Amenhotep IV, pharoah of Egypt in the eighteenth dynasty who fathered six daughters but no son on Nefertiti his queen and cancelled the worship of hawks and bulls and changed his name to Akhnaton, "it pleases Aton," the single god, the sun that causes growth)—and him the son of Negro slaves, named Grant maybe for the Union general (a name he could not recognise or write), who grew up near Chatham, Virginia and made his one son Felix on a woman named Ruth and left them both to go south to work and somehow settled in Macon near us, finally with us (claiming he could make things grow, which he could), and tended me nights when I was a baby and our yard when we had one and for his own reasons loved my father and was loved by him and maybe loved me, *trusted* me enough to put his salvation in my hands that last day I saw him (him about ninety and me twenty-one) and believed what I said—that in Heaven he would meet the few folks he missed—and claimed he would see me there. And this is the point, this is what I know after this last week—that final joke, if it *was* a joke (him saying he would see me in Heaven), whoever it was on, it was not on him.

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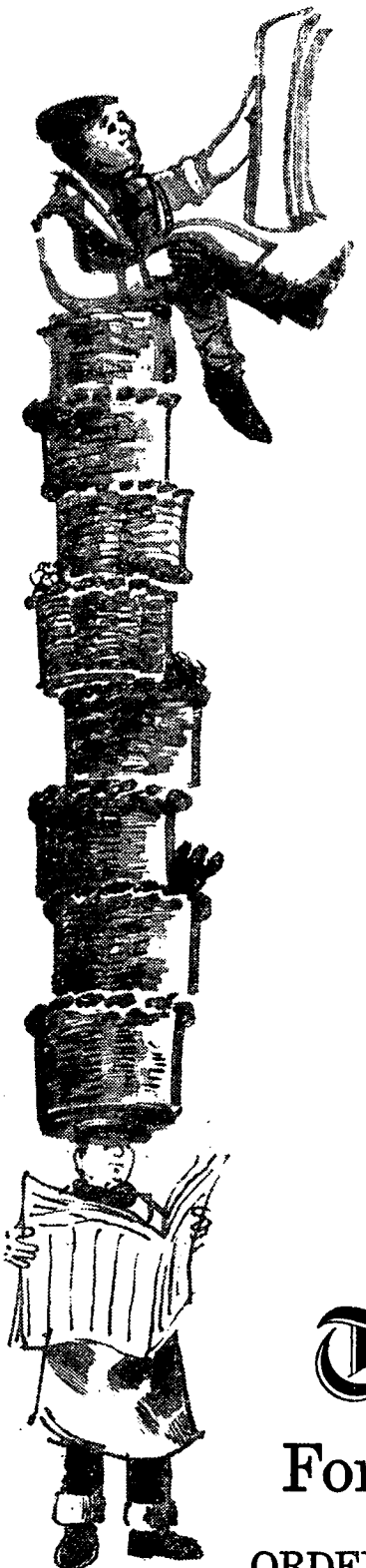

On balance

Let's see what the Dictionary says. BALANCE (n.) Weighing apparatus etc. etc. (*not quite what we mean*); regulating gear of clock or watch (*never mind that*); Zodiac constellation (*well we are all stars here!*); the weighing of ideas and opinions (*getting warmer*); harmony of design and proportion (*yes, yes!*); steady position (*that's it—that's us all right*). The Sunday Telegraph is founded on harmony and a steady position. Between the excesses of solemnity and frivolity we exhibit a good sense of proportion. We take up a steady position between The Establishment and The Irreverent. We weigh our ideas and opinions in the light of the reasonable man and woman. In fact, we think that our success shows that it is precisely the balance of the Sunday Telegraph that has been missing from Britain's Sunday reading. Keep *your* balance by reading the Sunday Telegraph each week.

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Some Letters of
George Orwell

To Cyril Connolly, Richard Rees, Stephen Spender, T. R. Fyvel and others

The 1930s

14.2.36

Dear Connolly,

I was sorry I missed seeing you again before leaving London. When is your novel coming out? I will write to the Obelisk Press (by the way you might tell me their address) and ask for a copy, then I expect I can either review it or get it reviewed for the *New English Weekly*. Not that that gives one much of a boost, but every little helps. Possibly also the *Adelphi*, but this I doubt, as they now fight shy of everything that hasn't a political implication.

I am living here with a family of coal-miners, employed and unemployed. After staying a month in Lancs. I intend to go on to Yorkshire or Durham or both and have a look at the mines and miners there. I haven't been down any coal mines yet but am arranging to do so. The miners here are very nice people, very warm-hearted and willing to take one for granted. I would like to stay a good long time in the north, 6 months or a year, only it means being away from my girl and also I shall have to come back and do some work after about a couple of months. I am just correcting the proofs of my novel, which should be out in about a month I suppose; otherwise not doing any work, as it is impossible in these surroundings....

Yours,

ERIC A. BLAIR

Wigan, Lancs.
29.3.36

Dear Richard,

I thought you might like a line to hear how I am getting on in partibus infidelium. Your introductions were of the greatest value to me, especially that to Meade, who put me in touch with a friend at Wigan who was exactly what I wanted. I have been here nearly three weeks and have collected reams of notes and statistics, though in what way I shall use them I haven't made up my mind yet. I have been living and associating almost entirely with miners, largely unemployed of course. The lads at the N.U.W.M. have been of great service to me and everyone has been most willing to answer questions and show me over their houses. I have gone into the housing question rather minutely, because it is a very urgent one here and I gather in most places in the north. I have only been down one coal mine so far but hope to go down some more in Yorkshire. It was for me a pretty devastating experience and it is a fearful thought that the labour of crawling as far as the coal face (about a mile in this case but as much as 3 miles in some mines), which was enough to put my legs out of action for four days, is only the beginning and ending of a miner's day's work, and his real work comes in between. Have you ever been down a mine? I don't think I shall ever feel quite the same about coal again....

I am arranging to take a cottage at Wallington near Baldock in Herts, rather a pig in a poke because I have never seen it, but I am trusting the friends who have chosen it for me, and it is very cheap, only 7/6 a week. My novel ought to be out in a few weeks. There was the usual last-minute stew about libel, this time, unfortunately after it was in proof so that I had to spoil a whole chapter with alterations. This business of libel is becoming a nightmare—it appears that there now exist firms of crook solicitors who make a regular income by black-mailing publishers. However I hope I may get an American edition of my novel printed un-mutilated....

Yours,

ERIC A. BLAIR

The Stores,
Wallington, Nr. Baldock
Herts.

Friday

Dear Connolly,

The above is now my permanent address, for when your novel comes out. As you see by the address this used to be the village shop. There is now no shop, only vans from Baldock,

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so I am going to re-open it when I have got the place in order and arranged what wholesalers to deal with. I shan't make much out of it but I ought to make my rent and a little over. Of course I shall have to rationalise it so that it doesn't interfere with my work.

I think you said you had a car so perhaps you might care to come over some time, *e.g.*—a Sunday, and perhaps your wife would care to come too. It is about 35 miles from London and might not be a bad run on a fine day. If you do come any time, let me know beforehand lest I should have let myself run out of food, always a danger in these small villages. This is quite a nice little cottage, but with absolutely no conveniences, and if I stay here long, as I dare say I shall, I shall have them put in by degrees. The garden is a pigsty at present, but I am doing my best with it. I ought to be all set to open the shop in about 3 weeks. My novel should be out soon—would have been out a month ago only there was that b-x about libel. I went and saw Raymond Mortimer but he was very busy so I grabbed two review copies, one of which turns out to be rather good, and departed.

Yours,

ERIC A. BLAIR

The Stores
Wallington
Nr. Baldock, Herts.
20.4.36

Dear Richard,

Thanks for your card. Clitheroe, which I vaguely associate with cotton shirts, seems rather a melancholy place to spend the summer in, but everyone to his taste. I have been here about a fortnight, and as you see by the address it has been the village store, and as there is now no shop here (only a tiny village of about 50–75 inhabitants) I am going to reopen it as a "general" shop when I have fixed up with some wholesalers. Jack Common, who has something to do with a shop of the kind I believe, is going to advise me. I haven't as yet done much about it because I have been too busy battling with the garden, which though small has been left in an unspeakable state. It will be about a year before I can make it really nice. It is quite a nice cottage and very cheap, but no conveniences; I shall put these in by degrees if I stay, as I think I shall. I intend opening the shop in the afternoons only, so as to leave me my mornings to work in. I don't expect to make much out of it but I ought to make my rent and a bit over. Wallington is about 35 or 40 miles from town but you can get there fairly quickly if you bike to Hitchin.

I haven't begun my new book yet but am all set to do so. It is not going to be a novel this time. Do you know John Strachey personally? I was at school about the same time as him but didn't know him. I would like to have a talk with him about Mosley some time if I run across him. I heard Mosley speak in Barnsley and his speech though delivered with an excellent platform technique was the most unutterable bollox, but I heard Strachey state in

CYRIL CONNOLLY writes of Orwell's letters to him: *These letters seem to me interesting because anything about Orwell is interesting. He was a man, like Lawrence, whose personality shines out in everything he said or wrote. They also belong to one of the least documented yet most creative phases of his life when he was establishing himself as a social critic and political thinker as much as a novelist. I have described elsewhere my friendship with Orwell at our preparatory and public school, I then lost touch with him for many years (1922–1934/5 by which time I was among other activities reviewing novels for the* New Statesman *and I gave a glowing review to his* Burmese Days, *1935). I don't remember when we first met again, it may have been not long after* Down and Out in London and Paris, *for I remember telling an old school-friend of both of us, Denis Dannreuther, that he was back and in want. I also arranged with Raymond Mortimer later on for him to get some reviewing for the* New Statesman *(to which a letter refers), and tried to overcome his prejudice against the Left-wing university group of the 'thirties which I so admired. I think his letters show a gradual thawing from the defensive attitude he adopted to the London literary scene. When I first re-met him it was the result of an invitation to dinner with him at his rooms in Islington, an excellent meal cooked by himself. His greeting was typical, a long but not unfriendly stare and his characteristic wheezy laugh, "Well, Connolly, I can see that you've worn a good deal better than I have." I could say nothing for I was appalled by the ravaged grooves that ran down from cheek to chin. My fat cigar-smoking persona must have been a surprise to him. Our friendship continued until his death, but I have no more letters. We had both become much busier. The novel of mine to which he refers is* The Rock Pool, *the other book* Enemies of Promise; *his "girl" is his first wife Eileen whom I saw again in Barcelona during the Civil War. His novel is* Keep the Aspidistra Flying, *the other books are* Homage to Catalonia (*April, 1938*) *and* The Road to Wigan Pier (*1937*). *The novel he felt unable to write was* Coming Up for Air (*1939*).

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a speech once that Mosley was a very able man. I suppose Strachey has known Mosley intimately, and I would like to know whether M. is sincere in what he says or whether he is deliberately bamboozling the public.

I am going to bike over and see Common some day this week. It is about 8–10 miles. I asked them to send a copy of my new book to the Adelphi—don't know whether they have done so. I also sent a copy to Mrs. Meade because I had promised them a copy and M. asked me privately to send it to his wife, but this is troubling me, because I feel she might think herself obliged to read it and it might bore her. If you are with them you could drop a hint to the effect that presentation copies are not meant to be read. It is still beastly cold and everything very late. I have found no nests except thrushes and blackbirds and have not heard the cuckoo or seen a swallow—I usually see my first about the 14th. The blackthorn is out and there are plenty of primroses and cowslips but the hedges are still very bare. If you want to be quiet some time come and stay here, because it is a good place to be quiet if you don't mind the primitiveness, which is bearable at any rate in summer, and there is a nice room you could have.

Yours,
ERIC A. BLAIR

The Stores,
Wallington, Nr. Baldock,
Herts.
9.6.36

Dear King-Farlow,

Of course I remember you. But have you changed your name back to King-Farlow? It was Nettleton most of the time you were at Eton. I only got your letter this morning. It was forwarded by Cyril Connolly, who has been away. I'm afraid I can't possibly come along on the 11th, much as I would like to, first of all because it's always difficult for me to get away from here, secondly because like the chap in the N.T. I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come. Curiously enough I am getting married this very morning—in fact I am writing this with one eye on the clock and the other on the Prayer Book, which I have been studying for some days past in hopes of steeling myself against the obscenities of the wedding service. When exactly I'll be up in Town I don't know. This place as you see by the address used to be the village "general" shop, and when I came here I re-opened it as such—the usual little shop stocking groceries, sweets, packets of aspirins, etc. It doesn't bring in much but it does pay my rent for me, and for a literary gent that is a consideration. On the other hand it makes it very difficult to get away from here. But if you are ever passing anywhere near, do drop in. It's not much off your track if you are going anywhere in a north-easterly direction or e.g. to Cambridge. I should always be at home, except on Saturday afternoons and sometimes on Sundays, and should love to see you again.

I am not in touch with many of the Etonians of our time. Connolly came to see me once in town and he has been very kind in reviewing my books. I used to see Alan Clutton-Brock in 1928—just recently his wife was killed in a motor smash. It was sad abt poor Godfrey Meynell. I went and stayed at Cambridge with Gow when I came back from Burma at the end of '27, but though he was very kind it seemed to me I had moved out of his orbit and he out of mine. I suppose most of the others we knew are dons, civil servants and barristers. I hear you have been in the U.S.A. a long time and are very rich and flourishing. I have had a bloody life a good deal of the time but in some ways an interesting one. Please excuse this untidy scrawl.

Yours,
ERIC A. BLAIR

Sanatori Mauria,
Sarria
Barcelona
8.6.37

Dear Cyril,

I wonder if you will be in town during the next few weeks. If you will and would like to meet, you might drop a line.... If I can get my discharge papers I ought to be home in about a fortnight. I have been nastily wounded, not really a very bad wound, a bullet through the throat which of course ought to have killed me but has merely given me nervous pains in the right arm and robbed me of most of my voice. The doctors here don't seem certain whether I shall get my voice back or not. Personally I believe I shall, as some days it is much better than others, but in any case I want to get home and be properly treated. I was just reading one of your articles on Spain in a February *New Statesman*. It is a credit to the *New Statesman* but it is the only paper, apart from a few obscure ones such as the *New Leader*, where any but the Communist viewpoint has ever got

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through. Liston Oak's article recently on the Barcelona troubles was very good and well balanced. I was all through that business and know what lies most of the stuff in the papers was. Thanks also for recently telling the public that I should probably write a book on Spain, as I shall, of course, once this bloody arm is right. I have seen wonderful things and at last really believe in Socialism, which I never did before. On the whole, though I am sorry not to have seen Madrid, I am glad to have been on a comparatively little-known front among Anarchists and P.O.U.M.[1] people instead of in the International Brigade, as I should have been if I had come here with C.P. credentials instead of I.L.P. ones. A pity you didn't come up to our position and see me when you were in Aragon. I would have enjoyed giving you tea in a dugout.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

12.10.37

Dear Cyril,

I wonder if you are back in England. I haven't seen your name in the *New Statesman* lately. When in town I enquired after you but was told you were abroad. As far as I remember I wrote to you from Spain but not many letters were getting through at that time.... I wonder if you have been back to Spain and how things are going there. It is almost impossible to get any real news. Owing to having served in the P.O.U.M. militia I had to leave in haste with the police on my heels and most of the people I knew there were in jail, or were when I last had news. We were there about six months and had a most interesting time, but it is heart-breaking to see the way things have gone, nearly a million men dead in all, they say, and obviously it is going to be all for nothing. I was about four months in the line, got badly wounded at Huesca but am now completely all right. My wife really had the worst time, being in the middle of that awful nightmare of political intrigue in Barcelona. Richard Rees was on the Madrid front with an ambulance and got back just recently, but I haven't seen him yet. I am doing a book on Spain, of course, and writing against time to try and get it done to come out in March. It doesn't do one any good to have been mixed up with the P.O.U.M.— I have already had to change my publisher, among other things. The only decent book on Spain I have seen hitherto was that one by Franz Borkenau called *The Spanish Cockpit.* I dare say if Jellinek does one it might be good. Do you know where he is? He has left Spain and the *Manchester Guardian* couldn't tell me his address.

Write if you get time....

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

Dear Cyril,

Thanks, I would like to come to lunch on Friday very much. I would also like to meet Stephen Spender if he is free. I've often said rude things about him in print, etc., but I dare-say he won't know or won't mind.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

14.3.38

Dear Cyril,

I see from the *N.S. & N.* list that you have a book coming out some time this spring. If you can manage to get a copy sent me I'll review it for the *New English,* possibly also *Time and Tide.* I arranged for Warburg to send you a copy of my Spanish book (next month) hoping you may be able to review it. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

I am writing this in bed. I may not be going to India after all and anyway not before the autumn. The doctors don't think I ought to go. I've been spitting blood again, it always turns out to be not serious, but it's alarming when it happens. I am going to a Sanatorium in Kent to be x-rayed. I've no doubt they'll find as before that I am O.K. but anyway it's a good excuse for not going to India, which I never wanted to. This bloody mess-up in Europe has got me so that I really can't write anything. I see Gollancz has already put my next novel on his list tho' I haven't written a line or even sketched it out. It seems to me we might as well all pack our bags for the concentration camp....

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

2.4.38

Dear Spender,

I hope things go well with you. I really wrote to say I hoped you'd read my Spanish book (title *Homage to Catalonia*) when it comes out, which should be shortly. I have been afraid that having read those two chapters you would carry away the impression that the whole book

[1] The Spanish Trotskyist party.

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was Trotskyist propaganda, whereas actually about half of it or less is controversial. I hate writing that kind of stuff and I am much more interested in my own experiences, but unfortunately in this bloody period we are living in one's only experiences *are* being mixed up in controversies, intrigues etc. I sometimes feel as if I hadn't been properly alive since the beginning of 1937. I remember on sentry-go in the trenches near Alcubierre I used to do Hopkins's poem Felix Randall, I expect you know it, over and over to myself to pass the time away in that bloody cold, & that was about the last occasion when I had any feeling for poetry. Since then it's gone right out of my head. I don't know that I can give you a copy of my book because I've already had to order about 10 extra ones and it's so damned expensive, but you can always get it out of the library.

I have been in this place about 3 weeks. I am afraid from what they say it is TB. all right but evidently a very old lesion and not serious. They say I am to stay in bed and rest completely for about 3 months and then I shall probably be O.K. It means I can't work and is rather a bore, but perhaps is all for the best.

The way things are going in Spain simply desolates me. All those towns & villages I knew smashed about, & I suppose the wretched peasants who used to be so decent to us being chased to & fro & their landlords put back onto them. I wonder if we shall ever be able to go back to Spain if Franco wins. I suppose it would mean getting a new passport anyway. I notice that you and I are both on the board of sponsors or whatever it is called of the S.I.A. So also is Nancy Cunard, all rather comic because it was she who previously sent me that bloody rot which was afterwards published in book form (called *Authors Take Sides*). I sent back a very angry reply in which I'm afraid I mentioned you uncomplimentarily, not knowing you personally at that time. However I'm all for this S.I.A. business if they are really doing anything to supply food etc., not like that damned rubbish of signing manifestos to say how wicked it all is.

Write some time if you get this. I'd like to meet again when I get out of here. Perhaps you will be able to come and stay with us some time.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

Friday [1938]

Dear Spender,[2]

Thank you so much for your letter and the copy of your play.[3] I waited to read the latter before replying. It interested me, but I'm not quite sure what I think about it. I think with a thing like that one wants to see it acted, because in writing you obviously had different scenic effects, supplementary noises etc. in mind which would determine the beat of the verse. But there's a lot in it that I'd like to discuss with you when next I see you.

You ask how it is that I attacked you not having met you, & on the other hand changed my mind after meeting you. I don't know that I had ever exactly attacked you, but I had certainly in passing made offensive remarks about "parlour Bolsheviks such as Auden & Spender" or words to that effect. I was willing to use you as a symbol of the parlour Bolshie because *a.* your verse, what I had read of it, did not mean very much to me, *b.* I looked upon you as a sort of fashionable person, also a Communist or Communist sympathiser, & I have been very hostile to the C.P. since about 1935, & *c.* because not having met you I could regard you as a type & also an abstraction. Even if when I met you I had not happened to like you, I should still have been bound to change my attitude, because when you meet anyone in the flesh you realise immediately that he is a human being and not a sort of caricature embodying certain ideas. It is partly for this reason that I don't mix much in literary circles, because I know from experience that once I have met & spoken to anyone I shall never again be able to show any intellectual brutality towards him, even when I feel that I ought to, like the Labour M.Ps. who get patted on the back by dukes & are lost forever more.

It is very kind of you to review my Spanish book. But don't go & get into trouble with your own Party—it's not worth it. However, of course you can disagree with all my conclusions, as I think you would probably do anyway, without actually calling me a liar. If you would come & see me some time I would like it very much, if it's not too much of an inconvenience. I am not infectious. I don't think this place is very difficult to get to, because the Green Line buses stop at the gate. I am quite happy here & they are very nice to me, but of course it's a bore not

[2] The letters to Stephen Spender are published by permission of the Humanities Department of the University of Texas; the others by the permission of the recipients, the Library of University College, London, and Sonia Orwell Pitt-Rivers.

[3] *Trial of a Judge.*

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being able to work and I spend most of my time doing crossword puzzles.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

27.4.38

Dear Cyril,

Thanks for your letter. I'm glad you weren't shot in Spain. It's a bloody mess down there, the game's up I'm afraid. I wish I were there. The ghastly thing is that if the war is lost it will simply lead to an intensification of the policy that caused the Spanish govt. to be let down, and before we know where we are we shall be in the middle of another war to save democracy.

Did you manage to get my book to review, or did they give it to someone else? It came out on Monday.

I have been here abt. 5 or 6 weeks & I am afraid I shall have to be here abt. another 8 or 10. There isn't really anything very wrong, evidently an old TB. lesion which has partly healed itself and which I must have had 10 years or more. I think if it had been serious the exposure in Spain would have done for me, whereas I came out of that business feeling very well and actually putting on weight until I was wounded. I can't work, of course, which is a bore and will put my next novel back till 1939. I heard from Stephen Spender, who sent me a copy of his play and says he'll come and see me some time. Funny, I had always used him and the rest of that gang as symbols of the pansy left, and in fact I don't care for his poems to speak of, but when I met him in person I liked him so much and was sorry for the things I had said about him.

Please remember me to your wife.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

No, don't come and visit me. I know it would depress you—this place I mean—& it's probably a tiresome journey.

8.7.38

Dear Cyril,

I am glad you liked the book, and thanks for recommending it to people. I had better reviews than I expected but of course all the best ones in obscure papers. I had Jellinek's book[4] to review for several papers. I thought it was pretty bloody, the usual C.P. stuff of course and obviously written in haste, but he is really very good in a way. I suppose it's true what you say abt. people not revising their stuff nowadays, though it's incomprehensible to me. What you say abt. finding old letters of mine makes me apprehensive. I wonder how you can write abt. St. Cyprian's. It's all like an awful nightmare to me, and sometimes I think I can still taste the porridge (out of those pewter bowls, do you remember?). If you have written abt. Eton as I should think you might, you'd better watch out you don't get horsewhipped on the steps of your club, if you belong to one....

Today is the start of the Eton & Harrow match and it has poured steadily all day. I am much better, and most of the day out of doors. I still haven't done a stroke of work but keep toying with the idea of starting my novel. One good effect the rest has had on me is that it has made me feel I can write a novel again, whereas when I came here I felt my novel-writing days were over....

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

Boite Postale 48
Gueliz
Marrakech
French Morocco
14.12.38

Dear Cyril,

I see your book is out. Send me a copy, won't you? I can't get English books here. The *New English* were going to send it to me to review, but they haven't done so, perhaps haven't had a copy. I have been in this place about three months, as it is supposed to do my lungs good to spend the winter here. I have less than no belief in theories about certain climates being "good for you," on enquiry they always turn out to be a racket run by tourist agencies and local doctors, but now I am here I suppose I shall stay till about April. Morocco seems to me a beastly dull country, no forests and literally no wild animals, and the people anywhere near a big town utterly debauched by the tourist racket and their poverty combined, which turn them into a race of beggars and curio-sellers. Some time next month we are going into the Atlas for a bit, which may be more interesting.

I am getting on with my novel which was listed to come out in the autumn but, owing to this bloody illness, didn't get started till two or three months ago. Of course I shall have to rush it as I must get it done in time for the spring. It's a pity, really, as it's a good idea, though I don't think you'll like it if you see it. Everything one writes now is overshadowed by this ghastly feeling that we are rushing towards

[4] *The Civil War in Spain.*

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a precipice and, though we shan't actually prevent ourselves or anyone else from going over, must put up some sort of fight. I suppose actually we have about two years before the guns begin to shoot.

I am looking forward to seeing your book, I gather from the reviews that a lot of it is about Eton, and it will interest me very much to see whether the impressions you retain are anything like my own. Of course you were in every way much more of a success at school than I, and my own position was complicated and in fact dominated by the fact that I had much less money than most of the people about me, but as far as externals go we had very much the same experiences from 1912 to 1921. And our literary development impinged at certain points, too. Do you remember one or other of us getting hold of H. G. Wells's *Country of the Blind* about 1914, at St. Cyprian's, and being so enthralled with it that we were constantly pinching it off each other? It's a very vivid memory of mine, stealing along the corridor at about four o'clock on a midsummer morning into the dormitory where you slept and pinching the book from beside your bed. And do you remember at about the same time my bringing back to school a copy of Compton Mackenzie's *Sinister Street*, which you began to read... and there was a fearful row about bringing "a book of that kind" (though at the same time I didn't even know what "sinister" meant) into the school. I'm always meaning one of these days to write a book about St. Cyprian's. I've always held that the public schools aren't so bad, but people are wrecked by those filthy private schools long before they get to public school age.

Please give all the best to your wife. I hope I'll see you when I get back.

Yours,

ERIC BLAIR

P.S.—I suppose the Quintin Hogg who won the Oxford election was the little squirt who was a fag when I left school.

Boite Postale 48
Gueliz
Marrakech
French Morocco

23.2.39

Dear Lady Rees,

I do hope all is well with Richard. The last I heard from the Plowmans some months back was that he was still in Barcelona, but since the retreat I have had no news of him, of course. I hope and trust he got out all right and isn't too overcome by all he must have been through. If he is home and cares to write, our address is the above until about the end of March. I think my wife told you I had been ill with what they finally decided after a lot of X-raying was not tuberculosis but something with a long name. I spent about six months in a sanatorium and then they told me I should spend the winter here. I don't know how much good it has done me, but I have no doubt it was as well to be out of England for this winter, which seems to have been a very severe one. Of course this business has set my work back a lot, however I have nearly finished another novel and we are going to come home as soon as it is done, about the beginning of April....

It is very quiet and peaceful here. We have a little house a few miles out of Marrakech and we don't see any other Europeans except when some of the soldiers from the Foreign Legion come and see us. A short while back we spent a week about 5,000 feet up in the mountains, where the Berber race called the Chleuh live. They are rather interesting people, very simple, all free and equal, very dirty but splendid to look at, especially the women. They have beautiful little pastures with grass almost like England and you can lie about on the snow in blazing sunshine. Down here the country is flat and very dried up, with no natural trees, much like northern India I should think. The Arabs are terribly poor and most of the people work for about a penny an hour. For Europeans living isn't very cheap, not so cheap as France, I should say, though certain things are fantastically cheap, for instance you can buy a camel for three hundred francs, supposing that you wanted one. The brass and copper work that they do here is beautiful, but the most attractive thing of all is the very cheap native pottery, which unfortunately it is almost impossible to bring away.

We were most thankful to be out of England during the war crisis, and I trust we shan't get back just in time to meet another. The idea of war is just a nightmare to me, and I refuse to believe that it can do the slightest good or even that it makes much difference who wins. If Richard is back and doesn't feel up to writing, could you give him all our love and say we hope to see him when we get back?

Yours sincerely,

E. A. BLAIR

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The 1940s

Barnhill
Isle of Jura
7.7.46

Dear Richard,

Thanks for your letter of the 1st. I have sometimes thought over the point you raise. I don't know if I would, as it were, get up to the point of having anything biographical written about me, but I suppose it could happen and it's ghastly to think of some people doing it. All I can say is, use your discretion and if someone seems a B.F., don't let him see any papers. I am going to include among my personal papers, in case of this happening, some short notes about the main events in my life, chiefly dates and places, because I notice that when people write about you, even people who know you well, they always get that kind of thing wrong. If I should peg out in the next few years, I don't really think there'll be a great deal for you to do except deal with publishers over reprints and decide whether or not to keep a few miscellaneous documents. I have named you as literary executor in my will, which has been properly drawn up by a lawyer, and Gwen O'Shaughnessy, who will be Richard's guardian if anything happens to me, knows all about it. Richard, I hope and trust, is well provided for. I had managed to save a little over the last year or two, and having had this stroke of luck with the American Book of the Month people, I can leave that money untouched, as it is so to speak over and above my ordinary earnings.

I have been up here since the middle of May and am now well settled in. I haven't done a stroke of work for two months, only gardening etc. My sister is here and does the cooking, and Susan and Richard came up a few days ago. I suppose I shall have to start work again soon, but I'm not going to do any journalism until October. This is a nice big farmhouse with a bathroom and we are making it quite comfortable. The only real snag here is transport—everything has to be brought over 8 miles of inconceivable road, and I've no transport except a motor bike. However it's only necessary to do the journey once a week, to fetch bread and the rations. We're well off for food. We get milk in any quantity and a fair amount of eggs and butter from a nearby crofter, our only neighbour within 6 miles, and we catch quantities of fish in the sea and also shoot rabbits. I've also got a few geese which we shall eat off by degrees. The house hadn't been inhabited for 12 years and of course the garden has gone back to wilderness, but I am getting it under by little and little, and this autumn I shall put in fruit bushes etc. Getting the house running has cost a bit, but the rent is almost nothing and it's nice to have a retreat like this to which one can disappear when one likes and not be followed by telephone calls etc. At present it's about a 2-day journey from London, door to door, but one could do it in a few hours if one flew to the neighbouring island (Islay), which we shall be able to do another time because we shall leave clothes and so forth here. If you'd like to come and stay in for instance September we'd love to have you here. If so let me know and I'll tell you about how to do the journey. It isn't really a very formidable one except that you have to walk the last 8 miles.

Yours,

G

P.S.—You might find it rather paintable here. The colours on the sea are incredible but they change all the time. You could do some studies of red Highland cattle. They're all over the place, just like in Landseer's pictures!

Hairmyres Hospital,
Lanarkshire.
31.12.47.

Dear Tosco,[5]

Thanks so much for your letter. I'd love it if you did come and see me some time. Don't put yourself out, of course, but if it was convenient. They don't seem very lavish with their visiting hours, though. The official hours are: Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2.30–3.30 p.m., Tuesdays 6–7 p.m. This is a long way to come. I came by car, so I'm not sure how far out of Glasgow it is, but I think about 20 minutes' drive.

I've only been in the hospital about 10 days, but I've been deadly sick for 2–3 months and not very well the whole year. Of course I've had this disease before, but not so seriously. I was very well last year, and I think this show really started in that beastly cold of last winter. I was conscious early this year of being seriously ill and thought I'd probably got TB, but like a fool I decided not to go to a doctor as I knew I'd be stuck in bed and I wanted to get on with the book I was writing. All that happened is that I've half written the book, which in my case is much the same as not starting it. How-

[5] T. R. Fyvel, who succeeded Orwell as literary editor of *Tribune*.

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ever, they seem pretty confident they can patch me up, so I might be able to get back to some serious work some time in 1948. I'm going shortly to start a little book-reviewing for the *Observer*. I might as well earn a bit of money while on my back, and I've felt somewhat better the last week or so. The treatment is to put the affected lung out of action, which is supposed to give it a better chance to heal. It is a slow job, I suppose, but meanwhile it does one good to have proper nursing here. It is a nice hospital and everyone is very kind to me. The next thing is to prevent Richard getting this disease, though I must say of his physique he doesn't look much like it at present. He is developing into a regular tough and loves working on the farm and messing about with machinery. I kept him away from me as best I could after I knew what was wrong with me, and we are getting a TT cow so as to feel a bit surer about his milk. We have been boiling his milk, but of course one can forget sometimes. Early in the year when my sister goes up to London for shopping, etc., I am going to have him X-rayed just to make sure.

I should think it would be quite nice living at Amersham. It's beautiful country round there. I remember we went on the Guard manœuvres on Berkhampsted common, and everywhere there were wild cherry trees weighted down with fruit. That night we were billeted in a barn, and early in the morning I woke up and was seriously alarmed to hear a lion roaring. Of course we were near Whipsnade, which I didn't know.

Please give my love to Mary and all the others. I don't know if it is much use now worrying about Palestine or anything else. This stupid war is coming off in about 10–20 years, and this country will be blown off the map whatever else happens. The only hope is to have a home with a few animals in some place not worth a bomb.

Hoping to see you some time.

Yours,

GEORGE

Barnhill,
Isle of Jura,
Argyllshire.

18.12.48

Dear Tosco,

Thanks for your letter. I can't write anything. I am really very ill. I am going into a sanatorium (I think at Cranham, in Gloucestershire, but it isn't completely settled yet) early in January. I should have done so two months ago, but I simply had to finish the book I was writing and which, thanks to this illness, I had been messing about with for 18 months. I am now trying to polish off the odds and ends of journalism I am committed to, and then shall drop everything for at least two months. I suppose they will have to give me more streptomycin, at any rate I hope they do, as it seems to work and is much less unpleasant than the other treatments.

Everything is going well here except me. Richard is blooming. The weather also has been beautiful for much of the autumn, but I've barely been out of the house for two months. I've given up my London flat, which was simply being a nuisance, but I'll have to get another one later. Please remember me to Mary and to everyone at the office.

Yours,

GEORGE

3.3.49

Dear Richard,

Thanks so much for your letter with the cuttings, which I thought gave quite a good exposition of C.P. policy. I always disagree, however, when people end by saying that we can only combat Communism, Fascism or what-not if we develop an equal fanaticism. It appears to me that one defeats the fanatic precisely by *not* being a fanatic oneself, but on the contrary by using one's intelligence. In the same way, a man can kill a tiger because he is *not* like a tiger and uses his brain to invent the rifle, which no tiger could ever do.

I looked up the passage in Russell's book. If the antithesis to a "some" statement is always an "all" statement, then it seems to me that the antithesis of "some men are tailless" is not "all men have tails," but "all men are tailless." Russell seems, in that paragraph, to be citing any pairs of statements of which one is untrue, but clearly there must be many cases when both "some" and "all" are true, except that "some" is an understatement. Thus "some men are tailless" is true, unless you are implying by it that some men have tails. But I never can follow that kind of thing. It is the sort of thing that makes me feel that philosophy should be forbidden by law.

I have arranged to write an essay on Evelyn Waugh and have just read his early book on Rosetti and also *Robbery under Law* (about Mexico). I am now reading a new life of

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Dickens by Hesketh Pearson, which I have to review. It isn't awfully good. There doesn't seem to be a perfect life of Dickens—perverse and unfair though it is, I really think Kingsmill's book is the best. You were right about Huxley's book—it is awful. And do you notice that the more holy he gets, the more his books stink with sex. He cannot get off the subject of flagellating women. Possibly, if he had the courage to come out and say so, that is the solution to the problem of war. If we took it out in a little private sadism, which after all doesn't do much harm, perhaps we wouldn't want to drop bombs etc. I also re-read, after many years, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and *Jude the Obscure* (for the first time). *Tess* is really better than I had remembered, and incidentally is quite funny in places, which I didn't think Hardy was capable of.

The doctor says I shall have to stay *in bed* for another 2 months, i.e. till about May, so I suppose I shan't actually get out till about July. However I don't know that it matters except for being expensive and not seeing little R. I am so afraid of his growing away from me, or getting to think of me as just a person who is always lying down and can't play. Of course children can't understand illness. He used to come to me and say "Where have you hurt yourself?"—I suppose the only reason he could see for always being in bed. But otherwise I don't mind being here and I am comfortable and well cared-for. I feel much better and my appetite is a lot better. (By the way I never thanked you for sending that rum. Did I pay you enough for it?) I hope to start the serious work in April, and I think I could work fairly well here, as it is quiet and there are not many interruptions. Various people have been to see me, and I manage to keep pretty well supplied with books. Contrary to what people say, time seems to go very fast when you are in bed, and months can whizz by with nothing to show for it.

Yours,

G

Cranham
15.4.49

Dear Tosco,

Thanks so much for sending Ruth Fischer's book. I had intended buying it, but perhaps after reading a borrowed copy I shan't need to. I'll see you get it back. I read Margarete Neumann's book with some interest. It wasn't a particularly good book but she struck me as a sincere person. Gollancz also has a quite remarkable novel about the forced-labour camps coming along, by someone calling himself pseudonymously "Richard Cargoe"—a Pole I should say—how authentic I couldn't be sure, but quite a striking book, in the Slav manner.

There were several points in your articles that I had been meaning to take up with you. One is about Graham Greene. You keep referring to him as an extreme Conservative, the usual Catholic reactionary type. This isn't so at all, either in his books or privately. Of course he is a Catholic and in some issues has to take sides politically with the church, but in outlook he is just a mild Left with faint CP leanings. I have even thought that he might become our first Catholic fellow-traveller, a thing that doesn't exist in England but does in France, etc. If you look at books like *A Gun for Sale*, *England Made Me*, *The Confidential Agent* and others, you will see that there is the usual left-wing scenery. The bad men are millionaires' armaments manufacturers etc., and the good man is sometimes a Communist. In his last book there is also the usual inverted colour-feeling. According to Rayner Heppenstall, Greene somewhat reluctantly supported Franco during the Spanish civil war, but *The Confidential Agent* is written from the other point of view.

The other thing is that you are always attacking novelists for not writing about the contemporary scene. But can you think of a novel that ever was written about the strictly contemporary scene? It is very unlikely that any novel, *i.e.* worth reading, would ever be set back less than three years at least. If you tried, *in* 1949, to write a novel about 1949 it would simply be "reportage" and probably would seem out of date and silly before you could get it into print. I have a novel dealing with 1945 in my head now, but even if I survive to write it I shouldn't touch it before 1950. The reason is not only that one can't see the events of the moment in perspective, but also that a novel has to be lived with for years before it can be written down, otherwise the working-out of detail, which takes an immense time and can only be done at odd moments, can't happen. This is my experience and I think it is also other people's. I have sometimes written a so-called novel within about two years of the original conception, but then they were always weak, silly books which I afterwards suppressed. You may remember that nearly all the worth-while books about the 1914 war appeared 5, 10 or even more years after it

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was over, which was when one might have expected them. I think books about the late war are about due to appear now, and books about the immediate post-war at some time in the fifties.

I've been horribly ill the last few weeks. I had a bit of a relapse, then they decided to have another go with streptomycin, which previously did me a lot of good, at least temporarily. This time only one dose of it had ghastly results, as I suppose I had built up an allergy or something. I'm a bit better now, however, but I can't work and don't know when I shall be able to. I've no hope of getting out of here before the late summer. If the weather is good I might then get up to Scotland for a few weeks, but not more, and then I shall have to spend the autumn and winter somewhere near a doctor, perhaps even in some kind of residential sanatorium. I can't make plans till my health takes a more definite turn one way or the other. Richard is blooming, or was when I last saw him. He will be five in May. I think he will go to the village school this winter, but next year I shall have to remove him to the mainland so that he can go to a proper day school. He is still backward about talking but bright in other ways. I don't think he will ever be one for books. His bent seems to be mechanical, and he is very good at farm work. If he grew to be a farmer I should be pleased, though I shan't try to influence him....

Yours,

GEORGE

1.6.49

Dear Richard,

Thanks so much for your letter.... I have been a good bit better this last week, and after seeing my last plate they decided I am not so bad as they thought. Dr. Morland said the same, but he said I shall have to keep still for a long time, possibly as long as a year (I trust it won't be so long as that) and not attempt to write till I am definitely better. Another doctor whom David Astor brought along, although a psychologist, said much the same as the others.

I enclose a copy of that article I wanted you to read. The magazine itself seemed quite unprocurable, but I have managed to get it typed out. Actually some of what I said in it I also said apropos of Gandhi. I've just read the 4th vol. of Osbert Sitwell's memoirs—not so good as some of the others, I think. I know nothing about Goethe, nor indeed about any German writer. I'm trying to read Henry James's *The Spoils of Poynton*, but it bores me unbearably. Also read a short book by Rex Warner *Why Was I Killed?*—very silly, I thought.

So looking forward to seeing you.

Yours,

G

28.7.49

Dear Richard,

Thanks so much for your letter, with cutting. Do you think you could get your Mr. Roberts to make me a bookcase, same dimensions as yours but 5 feet wide, if he can manage it. If, as I assume, it will be of white wood, I suppose it should be stained or painted, I don't much mind which, except that if painted I think off-white is the best colour. I'd be much obliged if you could get him to do this and send it up to Barnhill.

I think you'll find at Barnhill one novel by Charles Williams, called *The Place of the Lion* or something like that (published by Gollancz). He's quite unreadable, one of those writers who just go on and on and have no idea of selecting. I think Eliot's approval of him must be purely sectarian (Anglo-Catholic). It wouldn't surprise me to learn that Eliot approves of C. S. Lewis as well. The more I see the more I doubt whether people ever really make æsthetic judgements at all. Everything is judged on political grounds which are then given an æsthetic disguise. When, for instance, Eliot can't see anything good in Shelley or anything bad in Kipling, the real underlying reason must be that the one is a radical and the other a conservative, of sorts. Yet evidently one does have æsthetic reactions, especially as a lot of art and even literature is politically neutral, and also certain unmistakable standards do exist, e.g. Homer is better than Edgar Wallace. Perhaps the way we should put it is: the more one is aware of political bias the more one can be independent of it, and the more one claims to be impartial the more one is biased.

1984 has had some good reviews in the U.S.A., such as I have seen of them, but of course also some very shame-making publicity. You'll be glad to hear *Animal Farm* has been translated into Russian at last, in a D.P. [Displaced Persons] paper in Frankfurt. I'm trying to arrange for it to be done in book form.

Yours,

G

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Melvin J. Lasky

America and Europe

Transatlantic Images

"From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning back. That is the point that must be reached."—FRANZ KAFKA.

FOR the greatest part of the last three centuries, few Europeans, with the exception of those single-minded souls who were about to make their way across the Atlantic, found it necessary to think about America. But for Americans, Europe was from the very beginning that other soul that dwelt within their breasts. Europe was their past and their heritage, their teacher and their challenge as a new nation. No theme in American history can really be divorced from the background of Europe, whether it be foreign policy, the pushing-back of the frontier beyond the Mississippi and the Rockies, or the creation of an individual style in the national literature. Americans have not always understood this, possibly because they have been so preoccupied with the thing itself: with nostalgia for the old country, with bitter memories of the place of their trial and shame, with admiration for the richest civilisation man had yet created, with hope that the new world would achieve something original and even fairer.

"The burden is necessarily greater for an American," Henry James said some eighty years ago, "for he must deal, more or less, even if only by implication with Europe; whereas no European is obliged to deal in the least with America." Perhaps, he added, in a hundred, or even fifty years hence . . . ? Surely that time has come. In every European land, "America" has become a main theme of parliament and press, school, café, and household. We would seem to be at the beginning of some new epoch. Is it too melodramatic to think that what we have called Western civilisation is now moving into a period of unprecedented partnership between Europeans and Americans, a period of some kind of "transatlantic community"?

In the United States of the fifteen post-war years there has not only been a new awareness of this problem but also the onset of a changing consciousness of "what it is to be an American" and of what attitudes a mature and "come-of-age" America is to take towards Europe and Europeans. American opinion has been in ferment. The country and its institutions are being regarded in a new way. In the past America was, alas, culturally dependent on Europe; now Europe is militarily (and not infrequently, economically) dependent upon America. As the editors of *Partisan Review* announced some years ago:

> America is no longer the raw and unformed land of promise from which men of superior gifts like James, Santayana, and Eliot departed, seeking in Europe what they found lacking in America. Europe is no longer regarded as a sanctuary; it no longer assures that rich experience of culture which inspired and justified a criticism of American life. The wheel has come full circle, and now America has become the protector of Western civilisation, at least in a military and economic sense.

The question which has fascinated me, in my own fifteen years in post-war Europe, is

THIS *is the text of a paper which, somewhat abridged, was delivered at the University of Manchester before a recent meeting of the British Association for American Studies. The first part of "Transatlantic Images," an essay on European attitudes to America, appeared in the December* ENCOUNTER.

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whether the wheel can ever break out of the traditional circle it has been making for centuries. *In Europe:* a utopian pro-Americanism in times of adventurous hope, and then the turn to a grumbling anti-Americanism in times of stress. *In America:* a naïve and nostalgic pro-Europeanism when life was raw and difficult, and then the turn to a strident anti-Europeanism when prosperity made for power and national confidence.

There have been the beginnings of a new and encouragingly self-conscious "transatlantic dialogue" on this theme. European writers have been prepared to concede that what separates America from the mind of Europe is an angry self-assertiveness on both sides of the Atlantic. Is it "the impatience of youth" on the American side and "the resentfulness of age" on the European? Surely, since the Declaration of Independence the Americans had been looking across the ocean for inspiration and when they were in Paris or in London to be "cultured" obviously meant to be un-American or even anti-American. How could this fail to be pleasing to the self-esteem of Europeans? They felt themselves to be the centre of civilisation, and even when in terms of power and economics there was a time of bankruptcy a European intellectual could claim that "we had to borrow dollars from the U.S.A., but she still borrows our ideas...." The disturbance in this balance of payments caused a transatlantic discord. Americans no longer care to sit at the feet of Europeans and are delighted to exchange their old role with generous grants to visitors to come and see and learn. The American way of life is no longer shamefacedly contrasted with the European; on the contrary, certain U.S. patterns are vigorously recommended if in politics there was to be stability and in economics efficiency and affluence. An observer remarked at the time of Marshall Plan enthusiasm, "To-day it is Europe's intellectuals who are fumbling with their psyche: the Americans have all the answers pat."

> This change is all the more distressing because neither side is fully conscious of it. Whether we are French or English or Scandinavian, we have forgotten how gloriously self-confident and how contemptuous of American ideas we Europeans still were even in 1938. We had the answers. Now we know that we haven't, and our new scepticism makes us rage against an American who thinks he has. He in his turn is quite oblivious of the intellectual somersault he has turned since the 1930s, and resents our scepticism as defeatism. If you can't pay your way and have no idea how to save the world, he says, the least you can do is to listen to my lecture before you grab my dollars.... (*R. H. S. Crossman*)

But the Americans, as I have been saying, are no longer as "oblivious" as all that. An American poetess wrote some years ago:

> The American artist and intellectual must give over expecting the future to develop according to region or historic example. America is soaked with Europe, in any case; and there is no sign that Europe as it re-builds itself, may not provide vitality, variety, and perspective for American life, art, and thought. For although Carthage never recovered after its furrows were sown with salt, Rome, like Troy, re-built itself innumerable times; and what may Europe not produce out of its present ruins?... (*Louise Bogan*)

There has been not only this strand of American confidence in Europe but also an understanding that with the coming of world power it would be disastrous for the United States to retreat into a narrow and self-satisfied cultural nationalism. There were even suggestions that, as American foreign policy tried to make a reality out of the hypothetical unity of Western Europe, so should American intellectuals attempt to realise the Goethean concept of *Weltliteratur*. At any rate, for the first time in centuries there was in the search for a transatlantic identity no glee and no malice, no flight from self nor heaviness of heart.

> We cannot affirm America without reaffirming Europe and the West. Humans are beings with a history, a past; Europe is our past; and even God cannot will the past not to have been....

But if this is the point that had to be reached, and from which there may be no turning back, it was not always this way, for the past is the history of a strange transatlantic tension within the American soul, of glee and malice, of withdrawal and return.

The New World & the Old

IN THE BEGINNING there was the adventure, the discovery, the flight. America was created as a myth of hope and renewal, and it was only natural that Europe should be assigned the role of despair and decay. "I write the Wonders of the Christian Religion"—so the 17th-century Puritan divine, Cotton Mather, began his *Magnalia Christi Americana*—"flying from the deprivations of Europe, to the American Strand...." There was throughout this first

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century of American intellectual consciousness a prophetical identification of America with the judgment of righteousness. The greatest American theologian of the 18th century, Jonathan Edwards, argued that "the old world slew Christ; the new world, though it does not escape the brotherhood of sin and though its victory shall come in accordance with the dialectic of history, is nevertheless the hope of the world, if there is hope anywhere...." Indeed, if the millennium is to commence anywhere it would be in America.

In fact, the words of Bishop Berkeley (who visited Rhode Island for a few years in the early 1700s to help convert the Indians) echoed for generations through the American mind:

> *Not such as Europe breeds, in her decay,*
> *Such as she bred, when fresh and young;*
> *When heavenly flame did animate her clay,*
> *By future poets shall be sung.*
>
> *Westward the course of empire takes its way ...*

How could there be any doubt of the great future ahead? "Courage, then, Americans!" writes a Whig in 1768, "religion and science are on the wing to these shores...." In 1770 Trumbull poetically entreats:

> *Prove to the world, in these new-dawning skies,*
> *What genius kindles and what arts arise;*
> *What fav'ring Muses lent their willing aid ...*
> *Here shall some Shakespeare charm the rising age,*
> *And hold in magic chains the listening stage ...*

In a poem of 1794 Timothy Dwight tells his countrymen:

> *Cast around*
> *The eye of searching reason, and declare*
> *What Europe proffers, but a patchwork sway ...*
> *Copy not from others,*
> *Shun the lures of Europe.*

The classical faith of the 18th century in America is summed up by Noah Webster (of "Dictionary" fame) who demanded a purely American literature:

> Europe is grown old in folly, corruption, and tyranny. In that country laws are perverted, manners are licentious, literature is declining, and human nature is debased.... American glory begins to dawn at a favourable period, and under flattering circumstances. We have the experience of the whole world before our eyes; but to receive indiscriminately the maxims of government, the manners and literary taste of Europe, and make them the ground on which to build our systems in America, must soon convince us that a durable and stately edifice can never be created upon the mouldering pillars of antiquity.

One plea is even recorded in the *North American Review* for a reversion to the Indian language and Indian ways if one were to be genuinely independent! ...

"What, then, is the American, this new man?" asked Crèvecoeur in the most famous paragraph of his *Letters of An American Farmer*. He is the Western pilgrim who has left ancient prejudices and manners behind him; he is "a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions"; he carries along with him what began long ago in the East, for he will "finish the great circle."*

The passions and energies of the American Revolutionary movement gave this Americanism an even more polemical note. "In no instance," proclaimed Thomas Paine, "hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems. England to Europe: America to itself! ..." And in his pamphlet *Common Sense* he formulated a pride in "the new World, which has been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe" that was later to be symbolised in the Statue of Liberty in New York harbour.

AM I TRYING TO SUGGEST a permanent "anti-Europeanism" and "isolationism" in the American mind? Not at all. Men like Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson reveal the ambiguity of all these American pronouncements, and the pendulum-like shifts from a sense of American exceptionalism to a larger feeling of kinship with Europe "and the whole world." Franklin, especially, manifests neither the nostalgia nor the estrangement so characteristic of his compatriots. He took for granted

* It would be wrong to think of this as a peculiarly American faith. In Europe's optimistic and utopian 19th century the sharing of this vision of a "grand America" was not rare.

"I think that whatever difficulties they may have to surmount," Herbert Spencer wrote in 1891, "and whatever tribulations they may have to pass through, the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilisation grander than any the world has known."

At that time the American echo was a bit soberer —for William James says "I suspect we have the bigger eventual destiny after all, and, give us a thousand years and we may catch up in many details."

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the unity of civilisation and the universal fraternity of thoughtful men. The difference between the Old World and the New was to Franklin a political and economic difference, not one of morals or basic culture. He had, of course, the American pride—travelling in Europe, he wrote in 1772,

> had I never been in the American colonies, but were to form my judgment of civil society by what I have lately seen, I should never advise a nation of savages to admit of civilisation....

But this did not blind him that his political and social ideals were in ferment in Europe too, and he could report from Paris during the Revolution that "all Europe is in our side of the question," and that "it is a common observation here that our cause is the cause of all mankind...."

This was apparently a time of great pro-American feeling on the continent. As Paine reported, "the face of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. The lustre of her revolution extended itself to every individual; and to be a citizen of America gave a title of respect in Europe." This feeling was reciprocated in America by a unique sense of international solidarity. "Old Europe will have to lean on our shoulders," wrote Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, "and to hobble along by our side, under the monkish trammels of priests and kings, as she can...." During the Revolutionary times (in France as in America) Americans sounded a flaming appeal:

> O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the Globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her.—Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind. (*Thomas Paine*)

During periods of grave international crises, as for example the Napoleonic wars, even the apostles of isolation turned towards Europe. It was Jefferson who had preached that "our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe." And it was Jefferson who in 1814 warned of the danger of allowing all of the Old World to fall into the hands of a single tyrant:

> ...But is our particular interest to make us insensible to all sentiments of morality? Is it then become criminal, the moral wish that the torrents of blood this man is shedding in Europe, the sufferings of so many human beings, good as ourselves, on whose necks he is trampling, the burnings of ancient cities, devastations of great countries, the destruction of law and order, and demoralisation of the world, should be arrested, even if it should place our peace a little further distant? No. You and I cannot differ in wishing that Russia and Sweden, and Denmark, and Germany, and Spain, and Portugal, and Italy, and even England, may retain their independence.

There are critics to-day who (apparently after a reading of Kennan or Niebuhr) bewail the element of "the moral crusader" in the American make-up; they overlook that behind it lies a special sense of responsibility of the New World to the Old which represents much of what is noblest in the American tradition.

The Temptation of Europe

GOETHE liked to talk about America. Sometimes he thought "it had it better," sometimes he thought of himself as a possible emigrant. But in the year 1824 (when the brother of Ralph Waldo Emerson made the Bostonian pilgrimage to Weimar) he felt it was "too late" to seek refuge in America, "for there is now too much light even there...." Emerson himself arrived in Europe a few years later; it was precisely the flight into darkness which was impelling Americans across the Atlantic, the "old-world character" of the continent where there was "not a house, not a shed, not a field that the eye can for a moment take to be American...."

Hawthorne, in whose work darkness and light were most sensitively recorded, was even more upset by the shadows of Europe. The walls of an old castle made him exclaim in his notebook, "Oh, that we could have ivy in America! What is there to beautify us, when our time of ruin comes?" Another figure in what F. O. Mathiessen called "The American Renaissance" wrote: "We forgot that though the country was young, yet the people were old, that as Americans we have no childhood, no half-fabulous, legendary wealth, no misty, cloud-enveloped background...." Whitman, too, was not immune to the spell:

> So far, our democratic society... possesses nothing... to make up for that glowing, blood-throbbing, religious, social, emotional, artistic, indefinable, indescribably beautiful charm and hold which fused the separate parts of the old feudal societies together, in their wonderful interpenetration....

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And even in *Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain notes:

> The change that has come over our little party is surprising. Day by day we lose some of our restlessness and absorb some of the spirit of quietude and ease that is in the tranquil atmosphere about us and in the demeanour of the people. We grow wise apace. We begin to comprehend what life is for....

Could, then, the American become a European again?

> We have stood in the dim religious light of these hoary sanctuaries, in the midst of long ranks of dusty monuments and effigies of the great dead of Venice, until we seemed drifting back, back, back into the solemn past, and looking upon the scenes and mingling with the peoples of a remote antiquity. We have been in a half-waking sort of dream all the time. I do not know how else to describe the feeling. A part of our being has remained still in the nineteenth century, while another part of it has seemed in some unaccountable way walking among the phantoms of the tenth.

Could, then, these Americans, these children of light, squinting, haunted, accustom themselves to the dark corridors of the old world?

But the "thrill of strange emotion," as Hawthorne said, was there only "while you are still new in the old country...." And, still new, the Americans were wide-eyed explorers. Jefferson had even put together an outline for friends who were going to Europe which he called *"Objects of Attention for an American,"* and Item No. 7 reads:

> Politics of each country, well worth studying.... Examine their influence on the happiness of the people. Take every possible occasion for entering into the houses of the labourers, and especially at the moment of their repast; see what they eat, how they are clothed, and whether they are obliged to work too hard....

And when he himself was abroad he too sounded the note of nostalgia and fulfilment—"Behold me at length on the vaunted scene of Europe!..." But he adds:

> You are perhaps curious to know how this new scene has struck a savage of the mountains of America? Not advantageously, I assure you... under pretence of governing they have divided their nations into two classes, wolves and sheep ...experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind; I can apply no milder term to the governments of Europe and to the general prey of the rich on the poor....

And to this conclusion all the tourist-pilgrims came, sooner or later. Hawthorne's "delight at finding something permanent begins," as he says, "to yield to his Western love of change...."

> ...Better than this is the lot of our restless countrymen, whose modern instinct bids them tend always towards "fresh woods and pastures new." Rather than such monotony of sluggish ages, loitering on a village-green, toiling in hereditary fields, listening to the parson's drone lengthened through centuries in the grey Norman church, let us welcome whatever change may come,—change of place, social customs, political institutions, modes of worship,—trusting that, if all present things shall vanish, they will but make room for better systems, and for a higher type of man to clothe his life in them, and to fling them off in turn....

With the onset of the American restlessness, the temptation of Europe had lost its round. "What is there in Rome for me to see," complains Mark Twain, "that others have not seen before me? What is there for me to touch that others have not touched? What is there for me to feel, to learn, to hear, to know, that shall thrill me before it pass to others? What can I discover? Nothing...." It was Van Wyck Brooks who remarked that Mark Twain, "writing of Europe, had cut the umbilical cord that united the still infant nation to the mother-culture...." America wanted to breathe alone, to speak with its own voice.

But youth was uncertain. "We are all the time wondering what is thought of us over there," Lowell wrote to Howells, "instead of going quietly about our business." In his message to America, Tolstoy said: "And I should like to ask the American people why they do not pay more attention to their own voices...?" The answer was sometimes they did not hear them, sometimes they did not recognise them. Curiously enough, it was in the perspective from Europe that Americans first became aware of their own style and identity. Emerson had been wise enough to observe that *"we go to Europe to be Americanised...."*

Jefferson: "Visit Europe; it will make you adore your own country, its equality and liberty, its soil, its climate, its laws, its people and its manners..."

Hawthorne: "I grew better acquainted with many of our national characteristics during those four years (in Europe) than in all my preceding life."

James: "My native land, which time, absence, and change have, in a funny sort of way, made almost as romantic to me as 'Europe,' in dreams or in my earlier time here, used to be. . . . Europe had been romantic before,

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> because she was different from America; wherefore America would now be romantic because she was different from Europe."

What an ironic fate for the old world—not only to populate the new world, but to Americanise it to boot!

Emerson, like so many others before and after him, called for a Declaration of Intellectual Independence: "We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe...." Whitman was sensible enough to know that the "argument is not all on one side." Still,

> a calm man of deep vision will find in this tremendous modern spectacle of America at least as great sights as anything the foreign world, or the antique, or the relics of the antique, can afford him.... Shall I not vivify myself with life here, rushing, tumultuous, scornful, masterful, oceanic—greater than ever before known?

"For who was our father and our mother?" cries Herman Melville in *Redburn* (1849).

> . . . Or can we point to any Romulus and Remus for our founders? Our ancestry is lost in the universal paternity, and Cæsar and Alfred, St. Paul and Luther, and Homer and Shakespeare are as much ours as Washington, who is as much the world's as our own. We are the heirs of all time, and with all nations we divide our inheritance.

This, then, would seem to be the course of the dialectic, an almost deceptively simple thesis, antithesis, and synthesis: a partisan and nostalgic pro-Europeanism, a passionate and patriotic pro-Americanism, a cosmopolitan resolution.

Transatlantic Portrait (I): Cooper

WHEN James Fenimore Cooper sailed for Europe in the summer of 1826 he appeared to be the beginning of the fulfilment of a century-old dream for a great native American literature. What could be more heroic, more epical than the Leatherstocking Tales? Here—in *The Spy*, *The Pioneers*, *The Last of the Mohicans*—was the poetry of revolution, frontier, and Indian-fighting. Was this less noble than the warfare between Christian and Moor in the *Song of Roland*, or the founding of Rome in the Aeneid? As "the American *Scott*," he paid his respects to Sir Walter and remained on the continent for seven years.

What never failed to shock him was the extent of European ignorance of America. The travel-books were inaccurate, prejudiced, and hostile.* Radicals often harmed the truth as much as Tories, for as Cooper observed: "Finding that things fall short of the political Elysium of their imaginations, they fly into the opposite extremes, as a sort of *amende honorable* to their own folly and ignorance."

It was the Marquis de Lafayette who first suggested the "transatlantic theme" to Cooper (and it proved to be the fateful element in his career for the next twenty-five years). Lafayette was the "grand old man" of French republicanism; he had fought as a general under Washington in the American Revolution, had been vice-President of the National Assembly in 1789, had been liberated in Austria by Napoleon. He often thought of himself as "the Washington of France," and the "pro-Americanism" of his own liberal ideology (religious toleration, abolition of slavery, freedom of the press, parliamentary rule) was countered by the "anti-Americanism" of his critics and opponents. Cooper himself, in his years abroad, became an ardent and embattled defender of republican ideas. He was in Germany when the July Revolution broke out and the Bourbons were expelled from France in 1830, and he hurried

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* Were the American themselves always blameless here? Captain Marryat has written in his *Diary in America*:

> The Americans are often themselves the cause of their being misrepresented; there is no country perhaps in which the habit of deceiving for amusement, or what is termed hoaxing, is so common.... If they have the slightest suspicion that a foreigner is about to write a book, nothing appears to give them so much pleasure as to try to mislead him.... When I was at Boston, a gentleman of my acquaintance brought me Miss Martineau's work, and was excessively delighted when he pointed out to me two pages of fallacies which he had told her with a grave face, and which she had duly recorded and printed.

Fifty years later the novelist Stephen Crane raged in a letter home:

> They will believe anything wild or impossible you tell them. And then if you say your brother has a bath-tub in his house, they—ever so politely—call you a perjured falsifier of facts. I told a seemingly sane man at Mrs. Garnett's that I got my artistic education on the Bowery and he said, "Oh, really? So they have a school of fine arts there?"

For a more recent case, see the witty catalogue of Simone de Beauvoir's errors committed in her *L'Amérique au jour le jour* as recorded by Mary McCarthy (*Perspectives* 2, Winter 1953), who as one of Mme. de Beauvoir's New York guides must have, I suspect, done her share of misinformation.

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from Dresden to Paris (much the same excursion as was to be made shortly after by Heine). Paris was once again the Mecca of lovers of liberty, and when the Poles rose in revolt Cooper presided at mass-meetings in order to raise funds for the troops in Poland. (Edgar Allan Poe said he was going to Paris to join the Polish army....)

Early in their European friendship Lafayette had asked Cooper to write an account of his triumphal American tour. Cooper did not find the idea of a book of official speeches and celebrations especially attractive. But he was inspired by the idea of a book about America itself. It would "explain America to Europe, and show what a sane, balanced book about America by an intelligent, open-minded foreigner would be like." (In Scott's *Quarterly Review* the inherent inferiority of Americans had been so established that the only question which remained "open for discussion" was the cause: Was it the climate or the food?)

Cooper's book of 1828—*Notions of the Americans: Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor*—is a distinguished American contribution to the transatlantic dialogue and happily betrays few of the vices of the propaganda tracts which in our own time prove so disorienting: it was no grey official apologia but a pamphlet of temperamental individuality. It had, of course, its one-sided moments: the omission of the Indian tragedy, the attempt to explain away Negro slavery on the grounds that Europeans instituted the slave trade, etc. The transatlantic dialogue is, on both sides, always in danger of degenerating into a debate with all the attendant vices of rhetorical trickery. But Cooper was honest, as witness a passage on "the poverty of material" in his native land (a passage which is echoed throughout American literature from Hawthorne to Henry James):

> There are no annals for the historian; no follies (beyond the most vulgar and commonplace) for the satirist; no manners for the dramatist; no obscure fictions for the writer of romance; no gross and hardy offences against decorum for the moralist; nor any of the rich artificial auxiliaries of poetry.... There is no costume for the peasant (there is scarcely a peasant at all), no wig for the judge, no baton for the general, no diadem for the chief magistrate.

Travelling in Italy, Cooper is captivated by the idea of a "cultural exchange" of the populations of Rome and New York for a year: "while the one party might partially awake from its dream of centuries, the other might discover that there is something valuable besides money...." With this note Cooper began to cut the ground away from himself on both sides of the ocean: he convinced few Europeans, he pleased no Americans. This is, I think, one of the endless dialectical ironies which have caught Americans in Europe: Cooper was the difficult democrat in the Old World, and the fussy aristocrat in the New.

His novel of 1838, *Home as Found*, was inevitably a document of disillusionment. How could things but "fall short of the political Elysium" of the Cooper imagination abroad? He had returned to his own land "fatally cosmopolitan." The Europeanised family that set up house in New York, with its French furniture and Swiss servants, the children more continental than American, had no easy time. And the author began to delight in pointing out how much smaller the Catskills are than the Alps, or Trinity Church in Manhattan than St. Paul's in London. *Home as Found* was a picture of a narrow, mean, intolerant world, deprived of the graces of civilisation. "Are you reconciled to your country?" was the question the returning traveller was everywhere asked. Cooper remained devoted to the ideal, but with the reality he was indeed irreconcilable. It had been bitter for him to discover that his own countrymen, as well as the Europeans, had failed to understand "the principles underlying American freedom." Cooper's theme in Europe, the superiority of American principles, became, after his return, the inferiority of American life. (A century later, as we shall see, this was reversed: the theme in America, the superiority of European principles for the generation of "expatriates," became—abroad—the inferiority of European life!) He felt himself to be "as good a democrat as there is in America," a partisan of democratic promise rather than a compromiser with social reality: a defender of "the real America."

The familiar and permanent themes are, in the words of one of his biographers: (1) "In Cooper's day and for long afterwards, every question about American culture involved Europe." (2) "It was the European trip that made Cooper self-consciously aware of the great American questions." (3) "The length of the trip itself presented a problem." (Jefferson had said that an American could safely live abroad only five years. Cooper meant to stay away for no more than the allotted period but overstayed

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his leave. He returned out of step with his country; he doubted, however, that he had fallen behind, as Jefferson said an American would, and suggested brashly that he had gone too far ahead alone.) (4) Was this a way of admitting that Europe had unfitted him for life in America? "Perhaps. But he never regretted his European adventure. To the end of his life he defended the American artist's right of access to Europe as part of his heritage...."

Transatlantic Portrait (II): Adams

HENRY ADAMS was a twenty-year-old graduate of Harvard when in 1858 he sailed for Europe to study civil law (he did not know what this was, or any reason for his studying it) at the University of Berlin. Two years were to go by before he would return to America (in the fall of 1860, just before Abraham Lincoln's election to the Presidency).

"What shall I say of this city?" Adams wrote from Berlin in November, 1858. "Why, Lord bless my soul, I have got things enough to see and study in this city alone to take me two years even if I knew the language and only came for pleasure. The museums, picture galleries, theatres, gardens; there are enough to occupy one's time for the next six months. Then do the same with the half-million or so engravings. Lord! Such engravings!" But the young American was bored (and outraged) by the dull and mediæval lecture-systems, went off afternoons tramping through the Tiergarten, and then departed with friends on foot for the south. He delighted in the honey and the *Glühwein* he was served in Thuringia, rushed through Weimar ("they bore you to death there with Goethe and Schiller").

Nuernberg was something else again, and he wrote to Brooks Adams:

> My amiable brother, what do you want me to say of this city. I hardly know how to express it all. Think me spooney if you will, but last evening as I wandered round in the dusk in these delightful old peaked, tiled, crooked, narrow, stinking lanes I thought that if ever again I enjoy as much happiness as here in Europe, and the months pass over bringing always new fascinations and no troubles, why then philosophers lie and earth's a paradise. We passed the day in a couple of great churches lying on the altar steps and looking at the glorious stained glass windows five hundred years ago, with their magnificent colours and quaint biblical stories. So fascinating these things are! ... There's no use talking about it. Let it go! Nürnberg is Nürnberg. If I go on I shall be silly, even if I've not been already.
>
> So to-morrow we bid good-bye to Dürer and old Peter Visher, the churches and the streets, the glorious old windows and the charming fountains and all the other fascinations of this city, and march on to Munich.

When time had gone by and the journey homeward was to be made, he thought of his father in Boston, son of the sixth President of the United States, grandson of the second President of the United States: "I am fully prepared to hear the Governor lay the fault of every failure and every error in my life to Europe. God Almighty could not get an idea out of his head that had once got in." And the idea was, of course, that Europe unfitted Americans for America. Yet the young Adams showed no lack of national pride, and his patriotism seemed none the worse off for all "the temptations of the Old World."—"I have never felt so proud as now of the great qualities of our people, or so confident of the capacity of men to develop their faculties in the mass. I believe that a new era of the movement of the world will date from that day which will drag nations up still another step, and carry us out of a quantity of fogs. Europe has a long way to go yet to catch us up...."

This was the central article of the national faith. Charles Sumner whose carriage young Henry Adams had chased after one evening on *Unter den Linden*, collected an array of brilliant prophecies about America that had issued over the centuries from the pens of eminent Europeans. "Westward the star of empire..."—but this star Adams did not chase. He and his brother Brooks were the first great pessimists in the American tradition. They lost faith in the national destiny; and they saw no real hope in the Old World, for the sickness of modern civilisation was one.

> As far as we can see, if anything is radically wrong it must grow worse [this is 1894], for it must be in our system itself, and at the bottom of all modern society. If we are diseased, so is all the world. Everyone is discussing, disputing, doubting, economising, going into bankruptcy, waiting for the storm to pass, but no sign of agreement is visible as to what has upset us, or whether we can cure the disease. That the trouble is quite different from any previous experience, pretty much everyone seems to admit; but nobody diagnoses it. Probably in a year or two, we shall pick ourselves up again, and go ahead, but we shall know no better what hit us. To judge from what I can gather from the

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> *Economist* and other European sources of financial wisdom, Europe is rather more in the dark than we are. Europe and Asia are used to accepting diseases and death as inevitable, but to us the idea is a new one. We want to know what is wrong with the world that it should suddenly go to smash without visible cause or possible advantage.... Society here, as well as in Europe, is shaking, yet we have no bombs, no violence, and no wars to fear.

THIS WAS THE BRILLIANT DARK SURMISE of the future in the 19th-century tradition of Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Burckhardt. For his part Adams was troubled by the problem of "publishing the pessimism of Europe," and so to "risk perverting the childlike innocence of America...." His endless travels were self-confessed escapism. "Do you know," he writes from Mexico, "that I have travelled to every place on earth which travellers have described as most fascinating, in the hope of finding one where I should want to stay or return, and have found that Faust had a sure horse on the devil in his promise about the passing hour: *Bleibe doch, du bist so schoen!* Three days in any place on earth is all it will bear. The pleasure is in the movement, as Faust knew when he let the devil in to the preposterous contract...."

With pleasure or not, movement brought him again and again to the Old World: "Europe is steadily drifting on some unknown shore which I want to see before I die." He did not quite hold out three days in Bayreuth ("I was nearly asphyxiated"—he was obviously of the school of Hanslick among Wagner-listeners). "Altogether," Adams wrote, echoing the mood of a despairing German liberal like Theodor Mommsen, "Germany gives me the sense of hopeless failure. In fact I have had more than enough of Europe, and I'm afraid my appetite for America is not voracious either. The world has lived too long. So have I. One of us two has got to go. For the public good, it had better be the world that goes, for at least I am harmless...." To Brooks he offers the prophecy in 1898:

> France must follow Spain to the seclusion of local interests; and Germany must merge in Russia. So we can foresee a new centralisation, of which Russia is one pole, and we the other, with England between. The Anglo-American alliance is almost inevitable.

This new alignment haunted him, and he came back to it repeatedly. "In the long run—say in three generations more—Russia and Germany, if they work together, are bound to be the biggest mass, in the most central position, unassailable to us, and able to overwhelm us at any point of contact."—"The sum of my certainty is that America has a very clear century of start over Russia, and that Western Europe must follow us for a hundred years, before Russia can swing her flail over the Atlantic. Whether she can do it then is no conundrum that I can settle. I imagine that my grandpapa [President John Quincy Adams], sitting here in his study ninety years ago, could see ahead to me now, better than I can see ahead to the year 2000; and yet it was not easy guessing even for him...." This he wrote from St. Petersburg in 1901, before the events of the next period were to make him "half-crazy with fear that Russia is sailing straight into another French revolution which may upset all Europe and us too...."

Still his sense of the *Untergang des Westens* was not primarily political, and many years before Oswald Spengler's illumination he wrote (in another letter to his brother Brooks, the complete record of which is surely the most depressing correspondence of modern times):

> I apprehend for the next hundred years an ultimate, colossal, cosmic collapse; but not on any of our old lines. My belief is that science is to wreck us, and that we are like monkeys monkeying with a loaded shell; we don't in the least know or care where our practically infinite energies come from or will bring us to. For myself, it is true; I know *no* care at all. But the faintest disturbance of equilibrium is felt throughout the solar system, and I feel sure that our power over energy has now reached a point where it must sensibly affect the old adjustment. It is mathematically certain to me that another thirty years of energy-development must reach an impasse.
>
> This is, however, a line of ideas wholly new, and very repugnant to our contemporaries.... I owe it only to my having always had a weakness for science mixed with metaphysics. I am a dilution of Lord Kelvin and St. Thomas Acquinas.... (August, 1902)

The Goncourts had also seen the threat of atomic destruction, but they had not taken it as seriously as Henry Adams. It depressed him to the point where he felt that not only his world but also his own life had been nothing but a failure, and it is in the spirit of that hopelessness that he wrote his autobiography, which was published after his death in 1918 and became the most remarkable document of its kind in American literature. Did he really please his friend Henry James by attributing all

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the trouble to the fact that "we were all improvised Europeans, and—Lord God!—how thin!"?

Transatlantic Portrait (III): James

IF HENRY ADAMS was a blow to American optimism, Henry James was the shock to literary America's nationalism. How could it be that the most endowed literary figure of the time should go abroad, should become a "foreigner," should live and work as a European? This is a question which a more cosmopolitan America to-day has posed anew for itself and answered peacefully and satisfactorily, but for almost half-a-century (before and after James's death in London in 1916) it burdened the transatlantic consciousness of Americans. James himself complicated the issues for his entire body of work—novels, short stories, travel-books, criticism, letters—is in some way concerned with Europeans and Americans, their relations and contrasts. If he had not existed, I would, at this point, have had to invent him, for he is that exquisite thing, the perfect turning-point in the spiritual tension between Old and New World. "Not till we are lost," Thoreau wrote in *Walden*, "not till we have lost the world . . . do we begin to find ourselves." Not till the American had become a European—as millions of Europeans had become Americans—would he be able to discover himself. T. S. Eliot, once writing about James (but obviously thinking of his own problem as well), said: "It is the final perfection, the consummation of an American to become, not an Englishman, but a European—something which no born European, no person of any European nationality can become. . . ." A Jamesian perfection it was, but hardly a "final" thing; it was rather a beginning of a new consciousness and the raising of the traditional transatlantic tension to a new and possibly higher level.

There is a touching scene in the papers of the James family: Bonn 1860, Mother and Aunt sitting in arm-chairs, the two sons Henry and William working hard on their German, and "Father who is walking up and down speaking of the superiority of America to these countries, and how much better that we should go home. . . ." Henry James senior was a remarkable man. His two boys became most distinguished figures in American literature and science (William is the father of pragmatism and psychology in the U.S.); but as George Bernard Shaw once said, the old man "was the most interesting member of the family." (Perhaps the family itself is even more interesting: to be a member of it, someone once said, was enough; one needed no other country.) The old James had originally taken his children across the Atlantic in order "to allow them to absorb French and German and get a better sensuous education than they are likely to get here." It succeeded in making Henry and William the most cosmopolitan figures of their time, but the father "had gradually ceased to 'like' Europe." He found "an undeniable spiritual difference between Europe and America"—the Old World was the past, was exploitation, was servility. He warned his sons not to be enchanted by the historically picturesque, for he heard

> underneath it all the pent-up moaning and groaning soul of the race, struggling to be free. I am glad on the whole that my lot is cast in a land where life doesn't wait on death, and where consequently no natural but only an artificial picturesque is possible. The historical consciousness rules to such a distorted excess in Europe that I have always been restless there, and ended by pining for the land of the future exclusively. . . .

Henry James jr. came to the opposite conclusion; pining for the land of the past, he settled in England in 1876 and remained there, returning once to gather material for a book on *The American Scene* and the only other times for deaths in the family. Perhaps he should have made the effort to be an "American Balzac," but the world of business in the U.S. was "a closed book" to him. "It's a complex fate being an American," he said. "To write well and worthily of American things one need even more than elsewhere to be a master. But unfortunately one is less! . . ."

Yet James never got away from "American things." All of his memorable international novels—*Portrait of a Lady, Europeans, Ambassadors*, etc.—are devoted to the experiences of the new man ("Newman" is the hero's name in *The American*), or the innocent girl, Daisy Miller, the heiress of all the ages, in the dark corridors of European life. What could be less un-American than the tragedy of goodness and naïveté in an old world of greed and vice? His countrymen were very slow in discovering that America and Americans do not come badly off at all!—even if for James personally, poet of the moral dilemma, he needed Europe, could not survive without it, for it gave him the

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shadow he needed to offset the "white American light."

A WHOLE GENERATION OF AMERICANS never forgave him. Critic after critic excommunicated him from the national heritage. One of the most influential critics in America, Parrington, has insisted:

> He suffered the common fate of the *deraciné*; wandering between worlds, he found a home nowhere. It is not well for the artist to turn cosmopolitan, for the flavour of the fruit comes from the soil and sunshine of its native fields.

And a recent standard college text-book noted: "It is not certain that H. J. really belongs to American literature, for he was critical of America and admired Europe."

Throughout his lifetime James had this problem out with himself (and with his family).

> The burden is necessarily greater for an American—for he must deal, more or less, even if only by implication, with Europe, whereas no European is obliged to deal in the least with America. No one ever dreams of calling him less complete for not doing so.

Perhaps in fifty years, he thought, the European "would have to reckon with our civilisation as well. . . ."

William James appealed to him to make "the heroic effort" to return home:

> This is your dilemma: the congeniality of Europe, on the one hand . . . on the other hand, the dreariness of American conditions of life. . . . If you come your worst years will be the first. If you stay, the bad years may be the later ones, when, moreover, you can't change. And I have a suspicion that if you come, too, and *can* get once acclimated, the quality of what you write will be higher than it would be in Europe. . . .

"I know what I am about," he replied, "and I have always my eyes on my native land."

Was it, then, "a fatal mistake," as Van Wyck Brooks argued, to become an expatriate, a cosmopolitan? There were moments when even James thought so! He once confessed,

> If I were to live my life over again, I would be an American. I would steep myself in America. I would know no other land. I would study its beautiful side. The mixture of Europe and America which you see in me has proved disastrous. It has made of me a man who is neither American nor European. I have lost touch with my own people and I live here alone. . . .

But alone with his masterpieces! A youthfully patriotic America seized argumentatively upon these words, but who to-day can manage the naïve literary chauvinism which would exchange a bird in the hand for two in the patriotic bush? The brilliant revival of Henry James in America during the last thirty years has returned honour to the much-abused master, and is, I think, as much as anything a symbol of a new American maturity.

> It is as if he had lived his life as unrecognised, unauthorised, undreamed-of ambassador of letters at large. America, England, France, Italy, Germany, Russia—he rounded them all and included them in his mission.

The Whole World for Stage

"THE WHEELS of the clock have so completely stopped in Europe," wrote Randolph Bourne in August 1914, "and this civilisation that I have been admiring so much seems so palpably to be torn to shreds that I do not even want to think about Europe until the war is over and life is running again. . . ." Other Americans, in their shock at the outbreak and the horror of World War I, were even more bitter. The American Ambassador in London noted:

> The idea that we were brought up on, that Europe is the home of civilisation in general—nonsense! It's a periodical slaughter-pen, with all the vices that this implies. I'd as lief live in the Chicago stock-yards. (*Walter Hines Page*)

The President in Washington was soberer. In his inaugural address of 1917, Woodrow Wilson declared: "The greatest things that remain to be done must be done with the whole world for stage. . . . We are provincials no longer. . . . There can be no turning back."

AFTER THE WAR IN PARIS Gertrude Stein told young Hemingway, "You are all a lost generation . . .," and this became the inscription for his first novel and the name of a group of Americans who were to be transitional forces in the national culture. They were the adventurous young men in American history who went, not West, but East. "They do things better in Europe, let's go there." And off they went from Greenwich Village to Montparnasse—Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings, Ezra Pound, Hart Crane, T. S. Eliot, and so many others. Their dream was of an "escape into European cities with crooked streets. . . ." Their idea was "salva-

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tion by exile." These were the *expatriates*, and they waved to each other from the windows of passing trains in Europe. Malcolm Cowley, the historian of this generation, writes in *Exile's Return*:

> ... at heart they were not convinced that even the subject matter of a great novel could be supplied by this country. American themes were lacking in dignity. Art and ideas were products manufactured under a European patent; all we could furnish towards them was raw talent destined usually to be wasted. Everywhere, in every department of culture, Europe offered the models to imitate—in painting, composing, philosophy, folk music, folk drinking, the drama, sex, politics, national consciousness—indeed, some doubted that this country was even a nation; it had no traditions except the fatal tradition of the pioneer....

What would have that pioneer of American culture, Jefferson, have thought who 150 years before had said to Monroe: "While we shall see multiplied instances of Europeans going to live in America, I will venture to say, no man now living will ever see an instance of an American removing to settle in Europe and continuing there...." But perhaps he was wiser than he knew; for with the exception of Eliot who, like James before him, remained to become a British subject, almost none of them continued there.

Because whatever it was that these Americans had "lost" none of them could find it permanently in Europe. The pattern was an old one—we have already seen it innumerable times—the old pattern of alienation and reintegration, of departure and return. Cowley's poems about movies and skyscrapers and machines begin to have a nostalgic note about them, and he discovered that "I had learned from a distance to admire America's picturesque qualities...." The expatriates began to quarrel amongst each other. Was America really vulgar, vicious, a failure? Cowley once burst out—

> America is just as god-damned good as Europe —worse in some ways, better in others, just as appreciative, fresher material, inclined to stay at peace instead of marching into the Ruhr. As for its being the concentration point for all the vices and vulgarities—nuts. New York is refinement itself beside Berlin. French taste in most details is unbearable. London is a huge Gopher Prairie. I'm not ashamed to take off my coat anywhere and tell those degenerate Europeans that I'm an American citizen. Wave Old Glory! Peace! Normalcy!

America was, after all, their country and they began to feel a little homesick for it. The new generation of exiles came straggling back to New York.

> The exiles were ready to find that their own nation had every attribute they had been taught to admire in those of Europe. It had developed its national types—who could fail to recognise an American in a crowd?—it possessed a folklore, and traditions, and the songs that embodied them; it had even produced new forms of art which the Europeans were glad to borrow. Some of the exiles had reached a turning-point in their adventure and were preparing to embark on a voyage of re-discovery. Standing as it were on the Tour Eiffel, they looked southwestwards across the wheatfields of Beauce and the rain-drenched little hills of Brittany, until somewhere in the mist they saw the country of their childhood, which should henceforth be the country of their art. American themes, like other themes, had exactly the dignity that talent could lend them.

In 1930 when Sinclair Lewis was awarded the Nobel Prize he stood up as the spokesman of his generation of American writers: "I salute them with a joy in being not yet too far removed from their determination to give to the America that has mountains and endless prairies, enormous cities and far-lost cabins, billions of money and tons of faith, to an America that is as strange as Russia and as complex as China, a literature worthy of her vastness...." From Lewis himself to Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, and Tennessee Williams, this can, I suppose, be considered as the achievement of the new generation; and this, in turn, made for confidence, for maturity, even for what Eliot called "the historical sense":

> The historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence....

What this might mean for Americans, is that an historical sense of their attitudes towards Europe could possibly provide the opportunity to escape from the dead-hand of sentimental pieties.

One American scholar recently, troubled by the issues of "anti-Americanism," said:

> Most people are not able to stand personal criticism of themselves, especially when it emanates from strangers. Criticism of one's country, particularly if one is an American, is even less tolerable than criticism of oneself. Americans, more than any other people, seem to

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> feel that a criticism of any of their country's institutions or ways constitutes a criticism of and an insult to themselves. A psychologist cannot help wondering whether this sensitivity does not betray a rather deep-seated insecurity—individually and collectively—which causes most Americans to respond in this way to such criticisms. This insecurity explains a great many things about Americans which foreigners see but which many Americans are so frequently unwilling to face. What look to the foreigner like arrogance and conceit are simply the overcompensatory devices by means of which the American is trying to compensate for his feeling of inadequacy and show that he is a "success." . . . (*Ashley Montagu*)

In something of the same spirit an editor tried to face the "frightening misunderstandings" between Europe and America:

> For in Europe there has grown up a kind of myth about America, and it might one day be written that the free world destroyed itself because of it. It would not be the Big Lie of the Russians; only the fools believed that. It would be something much more inexplicable: the myth that for all our bath-tubs and our cars and our skyscrapers we are without moral purpose; that we are the New Carthago—all money, no spirit; that we are, in short, a country without a soul.
>
> If America does not destroy this myth, it will destroy America. . . .

And, finally, a few years ago this sensible (and already prophetic) thesis from Lewis Galantière:

> The attempt to "spread Americanism" round the world is futile and offensive; to spread "understanding of America" is another thing.
>
> I know of no revolutionary movement currently going on which, whatever its philosophic and ethical creed, does not have for its immediate pretext the material betterment of the life of the masses, East and West. In this art of material betterment, we of America are the leaders; and because we are, we are accused of materialism by those very non-Americans whose first purpose is a better material life for their compatriots. Those who thus accuse us, lose sight of the moral promptings behind our material system and assert that we have no culture, in the common sense of "refinement of taste," "acquaintance with the humanities," and so on. They do so because they judge us from the point of view of the culture of a bourgeois or aristocratic society, where nothing is easier than to run an avant-garde theatre or magazine for a mere handful of "cultivated" spectators or readers, at the expense of underpaid printers, stagehands, and other workers.
>
> Our critics are not aware that, as we tend materially towards a classless society, our cultural problem becomes a problem of culture for the mass, not for the few; that no European society has ever had to face the problem of, say, 100,000,000 people who possess the purchasing power to satisfy their impulse to entertainment and instruction. In a closed society, those millions could be ordered to read, hear, and see what their masters thought "culture"; in a democratic society, cultural despotism cannot be imposed; every movie producer, comic-book publisher, TV manager is free to solicit the patronage of those millions—and he does.
>
> This is our problem, and Europeans must learn to understand that it is a problem which will face them as soon as their masses have the purchasing power as well as the freedom which our people enjoy. In the cultural domain, as well as in the material domain, America is a proving ground which Europeans ought to regard with sympathy and study with interest—not disdain as inferior to the dark and shabby world in which a Flaubert or a Dickens was produced. . . .

WHICH LEAVES US, at the end of our documentary, with a number of questions. Was not the American notion of "exceptionalism," with all its unfriendly implications for Europe, the natural and understandable compensation for a strange transatlantic birth three thousand miles away from the Motherland? Was not the phenomenon of "expatriation" a unique tribute of a young society to an older culture? Is it sentimental piety on my own part to claim that the American tradition of "cosmopolitanism" is possibly the finest product of the national genius?

Perhaps the most significant fact of our time will be not, as Bismarck prophesied (with some characteristic continental envy and resentment), "the accident that in England and the United States the same language is spoken," but rather the fact that the Americans and all the Europeans, sharing as they do a libertarian ideal of a free and open society, were able in an epoch of historic challenge to communicate in a common tongue.

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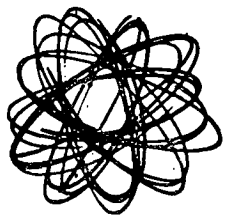

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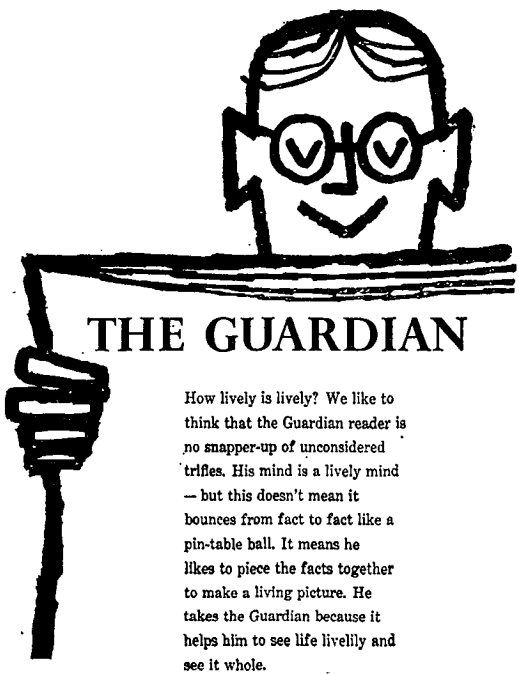

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Gregory Corso

In This Hung-up Age

A One-Act Farce Written 1954

Synopsis:

The year is 1954 and a Greyhound bus leaves from New York on its way to San Francisco. None of the passengers know each other, and each are going to San Francisco for different reasons, except the POETMAN who is following BEAUTY.
Three days out of New York and the bus breaks down.

List of Characters

HIPSTER:	*A New York City lower East Side delinquent, tough and endowed with slang and jazz talk, 20 years old; wears loud clothes.*
TOURIST:	*A red-necked mid-West square, middle-aged.*
MRS. KINDHEAD:	*Progressive Liberal Housewife do-gooder type, middle-aged or a little over.*
POETMAN:	*Little magazine type with social complaints, drinks, bemoans the plight of poesy, and wears sloppy but clean clothes, 20 years old.*
APACHE:	*American Indian, philosophical jazz enthusiast, 35 years old.*
COLLEGE GIRL:	*Radcliffe College, prim, sharp, naïve, 19 years old.*
BUS DRIVER:	*Greyhound bus driver, courteous, middle-aged.*
BEAUTY:	*Dressed in white gown, she never says anything, takes sleeping pills, occasionally blows on saxophone.*

BUS DRIVER: Be patient, folks . . . nothing too serious. We're not out of gas. Whatever it is I'll have it fixed in a jiffy.
(*He fidgets with the dashboard*)

HIPSTER: What a drag.

TOURIST: What a God forsaken place to be stuck in!

MRS. KINDHEAD: It seems like a desert.

BUS DRIVER: No need to fear; we're on the main highway. . . .

TOURIST: A pretty sick highway if you ask me. Where are all the cars?

BUS DRIVER: They're around. Not much as they used to be but they're still around. See? There goes one now.

TOURIST: Well, why didn't you go out and stop it!

BUS DRIVER: Now just relax; it's probably the motor; I'll have it fixed in a jiffy.
(*He goes out to check motor*)

TOURIST: Probably! It's "probably the motor" he says!

HIPSTER: (*Snarling at the Tourist to whom he's taken an immediate dislike*) He said relax, didn't he?

The Tourist replies with a do-I-know-you look. Meanwhile the Poetman takes out a pint of whisky and gulps down. Beauty blows a few notes on her saxophone, she sits at the back of the bus.

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APACHE: In this hung-up age not much great Poetman can do. Beauty gone mad. All time from New York she blow saxophone not so good; me know good saxophone or not.
(*The Poetman sails over to Beauty and sits cross-legged beneath her*)
Poor Poetman, what he understand? She speak like Greek; takes sleeping pills; I hope Beauty go to California for health.

HIPSTER: Looks like Poetman's got eyes for her.

APACHE: Great Poetman he all time follow her. She not see his eyes. Heap gloom. Heap gloom.

TOURIST: (*Laughing at something in his* Saturday Evening Post) Ha ha ha ha! Boy, that Winchell's sure got them commies pegged right! Nothing but a bunch of Chinese opium eaters he calls them! OOOooha!

HIPSTER: Whata you so anti-semitic against the Chinese for, man?

TOURIST: Do I know you?

HIPSTER: (*Tapping the Apache on the shoulder*) Seems like we got a cornball on the bus, chief.

POETMAN: (*Feeling the edge of Beauty's gown*) Why do you keep on taking those sleeping pills for? You're hardly ever awake; is it that bad?

APACHE: Poor Poetman.

HIPSTER: Well, like listen, man, whata y' expect? In this hung-up age what's the sense 'd-guy writin all dat boid an tree stuff when dere ain't nobody to listen, eh? In fack, even Beauty wants to fall asleep on him!

APACHE: Great Poetman no care if no one listen.

HIPSTER: Like face it, man, a great Poetman's gotta be hoid. Widout a audience the cat's like a chicken widout a head—beat—nowhere, dead, man, dead.

TOURIST: Hogwash! Haven't you two vagabonds watched the great plains and cities we've passed these last two days? There's your poetry! What's the Poetman think: he's the only one with the right to talk? Hogwash, I say. Besides, I for one think poets a menace. A lot of them write Communistic propaganda our school kids read about these days. Twisting their minds with all sorts of Chinese symbols. Well, I'm glad we Americans don't listen!

MRS. KINDHEAD: I listen. My name is Mrs. Kindhead, and I'm for progress, any kind. Now, if Mr. Poetman has anything to say, I'd gladly listen. What have you to say, Mr. Poetman?

POETMAN: There isn't any politics in a poet's life, and Winchell be damned.
(*He drinks*)
And God, Liberace, and oilmen, be damned! It's them twisting the minds of kids, and I don't write Chinese symbols, that's what I've got to say.

HIPSTER: (*To Tourist, with a very offended expression on his face*) Hey, wudya mean by callin me a vagabond before? It just hit me dat you wuz tryin to say I wuz a bum or somethin!
(*The Tourist ignores him; without the Tourist seeing him the Hipster sticks his tongue at him*)

MRS. KINDHEAD: (*To Poetman*) Is that all you've got to say?

POETMAN: Okay (*Takes more to drink*) I'll say more. In this hung-up age Beauty hasn't been altogether forgotten. But with all these movie, radio, and television creeps around, one's almost inclined to forget her. And the funny thing is that Beauty herself would urge us to forget. Can you blame her for being beat? Look at America to-day, look at what's happening!

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TOURIST: Hogwash! That drunk doesn't make any sense at all—and if he doesn't like it here why doesn't he go to Russia. Go to Russia if you don't like it.

HIPSTER: (*To Tourist*) Listen, mister, who's askin you to listen for?

POETMAN: (*Holding his bottle high up*) To Louella Parsons, the witch!

COLLEGE GIRL: I see no reason why a poet should concern himself with such inane things——

POETMAN: Inane, is it? Listen, girl, Louella is the mammoth madam of our emotions. She's worse than a Nero, and do you want to know why? I'll tell you why. She's a dictator of the mind, that's why. She whores you off to a phoney dream world that oozes over with a gush and sentiment, a peaches and cream world that doesn't even have a john in it—when she shows you the moon she shows you an Alice Faye moon, not the moon. Well, she can't fool me, they aren't going to get my emotions they're not.
No wonder poets sing of rotten things to-day. What good the singer who sings who does not sing *his* song?

COLLEGE GIRL: You're bitter over nothing. I don't understand you poets. Are you men? You always want to be understood, as if you were something other than people. Are you men? What are you then? Why don't you learn a trade, to call a spade a spade? In any age a man has got to work to live; he has no time for explanations; and, if I can be somewhat poetical myself, I would say lamentations rather than explanations. Yes, why don't you learn a trade, learn to call a spade a spade——

HIPSTER: That chick's lookin for some cat that'll woik for her. As fer me, I always call a spade a spade . . . if he is a spade.

POETMAN: That's just what I was trying to get at? To-day poets are frightened, afraid to call a spade a spade. It's what I've been trying to say all along: What good the singer who does not sing his song?
(*Beauty blows on her sax*)

TOURIST: (*Irritated by it*) Good God, what in vinegar is that!
(*Beauty blows louder and screechier*)
Cut that hogwash out!

APACHE: Beauty gone mad. Poetman gone mad. He try to fight nature; he lose. Nature all right without Poetman; Poetman no all right without nature. And him who all time say hogwash, him without hope.

TOURIST: What in hell is that aborigine talking about? What does he know of this age?

MRS. KINDHEAD: I should think quite a fair amount, sir.

TOURIST: And who in hell are you?

MRS. KINDHEAD: My name is Mrs. Kindhead, and I'm all for progress, any kind. What you don't seem to realise is that men like you prevent progress; men like you just ain't with it.

HIPSTER: (*Slapping Kindhead on back*) Crazy, lady, crazy.

APACHE: Mrs. Kindhead gone mad now. She first liberal, now she hipster. No good, no good this hung-up age.

COLLEGE GIRL: (*To Poetman*) There's something I would like to get straight. When you people talk about hung-up age, hung-up for whom? The poet, or for everyone?

TOURIST: What in hell is that bus driver up to! He said a jiffy, didn't he? A jiffy!

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POETMAN: For everyone. Doesn't it show? Don't you realise what's been happening in the last ten years? Look at the babe born to-day in this age—as soon as he is able to walk his Liberace loving parents wouldn't think of giving him Latin and Greek, no because that doesn't make money, so they send him off to school for a terrible knowledge. If once in school he dreams, if once he tires of trivial things, "lazy lazy!" the teacher screams, while all the while in his little heart an ocean sings——

TOURIST: How corny can you get!

HIPSTER: Shud up, y'creep.

TOURIST: Watch your step, sonny, that's all I've got to say, watch your step.

HIPSTER: Aw, go eat a dead frog.

COLLEGE GIRL: Now really, Poetman, you haven't made it at all clear. If this age is hung-up, it certainly is not the fault of a teacher calling a potential poet lazy.

POETMAN: It's not all of it, but it's got a lot to do with it—they're educating kids to-day to be anything but dream.

COLLEGE GIRL: In other words you attribute this age a mystery, something like, er, like the trinity of God, right?

POETMAN: What?

APACHE: Seems College Girl go mad too.

HIPSTER: (*To Apache, pointing at Beauty*) Hey, Tonto, wot's up wid dat chick in the corner do you think she's really flipped? Like one thing's certin, she can't blow dat horn's she's got. But just dig her legs, willya!

APACHE: She Beauty, Poetman chase her all his life; she no stop. She on her way to California.

HIPSTER: To Hollywood?

APACHE: Nope. To Frisco. In Frisco she hope to lose Poetman by joining jazz band.

HIPSTER: How? She can't play a crumby note!

APACHE: Don't worry. Beauty learn fast. Beauty like buffalo meat, easy to eat.

HIPSTER: Huh?

MRS. KINDHEAD: (*Quite attracted to the Apache*) Sir, you're something of a philosopher; I'm amazed by your metaphor.

APACHE: Me just Apache.

MRS. KINDHEAD: How shameful it is that we took this country away from you. If anyone's a true American, it is you, sir.

TOURIST: Ha! That's a laugh!

MRS. KINDHEAD: It's true!

TOURIST: Hogwash! We won it fair and square.

HIPSTER: Yeah, square's just the woid, pops.

APACHE: Me just Apache.

POETMAN: (*Drunkenly, to anyone*) The real truth of the matter is, if you want to know why this age is hung-up, is because people are too damn cheap to buy a poetry magazine——

HIPSTER: Hey, chief, tell me, did the Apaches really fight like dey show in the movies?

APACHE: Me pacifist.

MRS. KINDHEAD: Amazing! And we dare say you're not civilised!

TOURIST: (*Muttering*) Commies, I knew it! the whole lot of them, commies!
(*Beauty begins to blow sax again*)
Hey, miss, why don't you play that thing outside? And what in hell is that bus driver doing out there! Never, never again will I take another damn bus! Idiots! All of them, nuts!

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HIPSTER: Boy, mister, y-lucky y-ain't walkin down my neighbourhood. It's cats like you make juvenile delinquents outa innocent people——

TOURIST: (*Red in the face*) Keep it up, sonny, just keep it up.

HIPSTER: Y-scare me.

MRS. KINDHEAD: Do you live on a reservation?

APACHE: Me live in furnished room; pay five dollar a week.

MRS. KINDHEAD: Oh.

(*Long silence*)

POETMAN: Sure. A lot of people hang up Picasso prints and all that just to show how modern and intellectual they are, but just once, just once would I like to see them buy a poetry magazine. They're phoneys, cheats, penny pinchers! That's why this age is hung-up, it's because of them!

COLLEGE GIRL: How way off you are.

POETMAN: Why years ago a poet used to be treated like a king! If he was hungry all doors were opened for him! If he wanted a woman, fifty women came. If one day he dared stain his hands with work, the whole world wept in shame!

COLLEGE GIRL: (*To Hipster*) You sound New York.

HIPSTER: Right on the button, baby. Where you from?

COLLEGE GIRL: From Cambridge, Mass.

HIPSTER: What's happenin dere?

COLLEGE GIRL: Did you ever hear of Harvard?

HIPSTER: You mean the school? I thought it wuz only for cats?

COLLEGE GIRL: Cats?

HIPSTER: (*Annoyed*) Men, boys, guys. God, wotta square.

COLLEGE GIRL: I'm sorry if you seem slightly obtuse to me.

HIPSTER: (*Pushing back his duck-assed hair*) I seen worser lookin cats.

COLLEGE GIRL: I did not mean your appearance. No. I don't go to Harvard. I go to Radcliffe. I guess you've never heard of Radcliffe?

HIPSTER: I heard-a some things.

COLLEGE GIRL: Yes. Well, Radcliffe is a girls' college; it's juxtaposed with Harvard.

HIPSTER: Y-don't say? Say, dat's a crazy lookin blouse you got on, baby. Wot's it, silk?

(*He feels her blouse, she pushes his hand away*)

COLLEGE GIRL: It's linen.

HIPSTER: Y-mean wot dey make sheets outa? Me, I got silk. Imported. Here look.

(*He bends his neck in effort to show her the collar label*)

COLLEGE GIRL: (*Not looking*) I believe you.

HIPSTER: Me, like I sorta dig crazy clothes; wot's y-name?

COLLEGE GIRL: Guess.

HIPSTER: (*Perplexed, and bugged*) Guess? An you say you go t-college? If that ain't the stupidist—guess? How the heck can I guess when . . . like baby, you're too much.

(*He turns away from her, mockingly*) Bon swah!

TOURIST: (*Yelling out of window*) Hey driver, what in the name of Jesus are you doing out there! It's been an hour already! Is that your idea of a jiffy?

BUS DRIVER: (*Outside*) Pretty soon, folks, pretty soon.

POETMAN: They walk around in their grey flannel suits and think that makes them lovers of poetry. They're like turtles, cowards! hiding in a shell.

TOURIST: Oh, hell!

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APACHE: Soon everybody go mad. Bus no more; buffalo no more—me go mad too, I guess.

MRS. KINDHEAD: Oh, no. It's not all that bad. Courage, sir, courage! After all, we're all in the same boat, bus, so to speak, ha-ha.

TOURIST: Corny hag.

MRS. KINDHEAD: I heard you, sir, and I resent what I heard.

APACHE: This is not just atomic age, this also hung-up age. No hope. Everything like buffalo milk, good, then turn bad.

MRS. KINDHEAD: Such insight!

TOURIST: Did I get on the wrong bus? Did I make a mistake and get on a looney bus instead?
(*Puts his head out the window again*)
Hurry up, you clumsy ass!

BUS DRIVER: (*Outside*) Easy, mister. The bus driving school of etiquette does not say anything about taking anyone's guff. Just hold your horses.

HIPSTER: Ha, ha. I guess he put you down, but good.

TOURIST: I'm almost inclined to get out and walk!

HIPSTER: Why don'tcha, why don'tcha.

POETMAN: My poems will renew hope, and more! Only a poet can renew hope! It is the rose that seeks in the rose a flaw.

APACHE: Poetman got heap talent. Him now rose. Me, I no talent. Me just Apache.

COLLEGE GIRL: (*To Tourist*) Do you live in California?

TOURIST: (*Bluntly*) No!

HIPSTER: How can you have eyes to talk to a creep like dat, baby? He probably even hates his mudder.

(*At this point the Tourist red as a beet hits the Hipster on the head with his rolled up* Saturday Evening Post. *Small entanglement; both fall; women scream; driver rushes in; he and Apache separate the two contestants*)

BUS DRIVER: The bus driving school has given me the right to put off anyone caught fighting or disturbing the peace on this bus. Now let's not have it happen again. Good God, can't you people be patient like people? I'm almost done now, so be patient!
(*He goes out*)

TOURIST: (*Crying*) You hoodlum! I happen to love my mother more than anything else in the world. If more people thought of their mothers the way I do there'd be less talk of hogwash and hung-up ages!

HIPSTER: I don't talk t-cornballs.

POETMAN: Back to the womb! I advocate back to the womb!
It's the only panacea for this hung-up age.
We must all be born again.
We must all come out great lovers of poetry.
(*Falls in drunken stupor*)

APACHE: Him now go back to womb. Him can. Him got womb. So hogwash man. Me got no mother. Me can't come out great liker of poetry.

MRS. KINDHEAD: (*Putting her arm around Apache*) Oh you poor thing. No mother! How sad life must be for you. I wish in some way, in some form or miracle that I could, by the will of God, be your mother.

APACHE: Me not know what to say about that.

HIPSTER: I feel a romance comin on.

(*Beauty blows her sax again*)

TOURIST: Oh God! Oh God! Oh God!

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COLLEGE GIRL: (*To Tourist*) If you don't live in California, where do you live?
TOURIST: (*Completely despaired*) I don't know, I don't know anymore!
APACHE: This age impossible without saxophone. Without saxophone is like buffalo without tail.
HIPSTER: Wot's d-buffalo always got to do wid it?
APACHE: Buffalo to me what camel to Arab.
TOURIST: It's night, it's night out there!

(*Short silence*)

HIPSTER: Hey, Mrs. Kindhead, wotta you gonna do in California, if we ever get dere?
MRS. KINDHEAD: Look for progress, any kind.
TOURIST: (*Infuriated*) Lady, do you know what progress stands for, do you? It stands for communism, that's what! Don't you know we're at war with communism, don't you!

(*She raises her head defiantly ignoring him*)

APACHE: Not much progress it seem. Me once have vision, me see buffalo walk backward.

(*A tremendous noise outside*)

BUS DRIVER: (*Running into bus, frantically closing door*) A raging bison!
HIPSTER: A wot?
BUS DRIVER: A berserk buffalo! It came charging after me!
COLLEGE GIRL: Is the bus fixed?
BUS DRIVER: Almost. It was almost fixed.
HIPSTER: (*Looking out of window*) It's bangin its horns against the motor!
BUS DRIVER: My bus!
TOURIST: Go out and kill the goddam thing!
HIPSTER: Boy, looka it foam from the mout!
BUS DRIVER: Let's wave to the cars for help!
TOURIST: What cars! There haven't been any cars!
HIPSTER: Hey, chief, you know buffaloes, why don'tcha go out and talk to it or somethin?
APACHE: No can do. Heap gloom. It all right if everybody go mad, but if buffalo go mad, heap gloom.
TOURIST: Then kill it! Just don't stand there!
APACHE: Me no kill, me pacifist.
TOURIST: What did I do to deserve this? What??????
HIPSTER: Let's send Beauty out; maybe she can do somethin—y-know, Beauty and the Beast?
BUS DRIVER: No, she'd get torn to shreds, it's my duty to protect the passengers.
TOURIST: Then protect us, damnit!
APACHE: This hung-up age hung-up no more. Buffalo soon bring everything down. We all go to happy-hunting-ground.
COLLEGE GIRL: This is absurd. One shabby buffalo can't do all that harm.
APACHE: Soon many more come—there! Look!

(*Great stampede! Herds and herds of buffalo charge the bus*)

TOURIST: They look insane!
HIPSTER: I tought dem tings wuz extinct?
COLLEGE GIRL: They're coming right at the bus! At us!

(*Everyone screams. Lights go out. The bus is trampled over. Thunderous noise of hoofs and steel and human cries. Slowly the stampede fades—moans and groans*)

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COLLEGE GIRL: Help——
POETMAN: Apocalypse——
BUS DRIVER: My bus——
APACHE: This good-bye——
TOURIST: I'll sue, I'll sue——
MRS. KINDHEAD: My little cats, who'll take care of my little cats——
HIPSTER: Man, wot a draggy way to die——

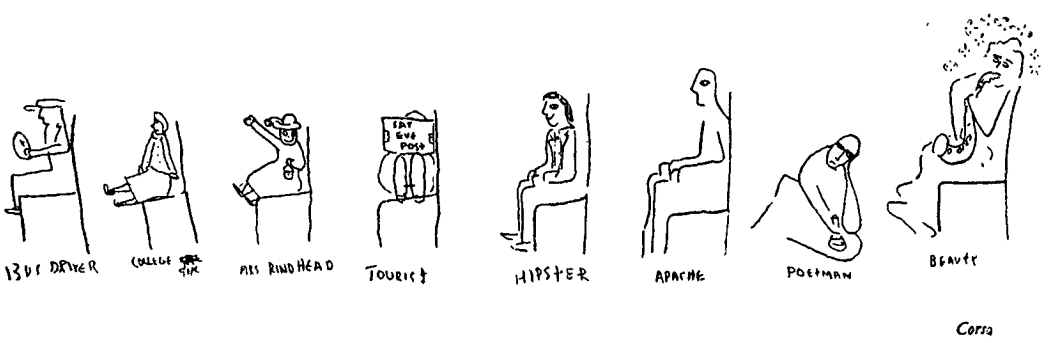
(*The moon falls full light on Beauty; she and the spot where she sat remained untouched; she blows her saxophone low, soft, and beautifully*)

CURTAIN

NOTE ON MY PLAY

This play was written in 1954 and was performed April 1955 at the Harvard Dramatic Workshop by both Harvard and Radcliffe students. I can safely claim that this play, indeed document, pre-dates anything ever written about the Hipster and hip-talk, the Square, and the advent of San Francisco's "poesy re-birth"—all of which came to light in 1956, Mailer 1957, and into a forgotten suitcase for 7 years went mine play. So what? So nothing. What is important is this: The late seers of Hip (not Beat) recorded their see seriously, *whereas I termed this play a farce. I saw the advent and deemed it farce. My Hipster is farcical, my poet is farcical, my square, the entire American social-revolution to come, was very real before my eyes 7 years ago, but being that I was truly a hipster, the only hip thing to do was to laugh that silly vision straight in the face, and I did. Thus I feel obliged, that I was the first to see and laugh, to be the last to see and laugh: I still hold it a farce. Thank you, Gregorio Nunzio Corso—my full name, which means: The Watchful One, The Announcer, The Way.*

GREGORIO NUNZIO CORSO



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METHUEN

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POETRY

W. H. Auden

A Change of Air

Corns, heartburn, sinus headaches, such minor ailments
Tell of estrangement between your name and you,
Advise a change of air: heed them, but let
The modesty of their discomfort warn you
Against the flashy errands of your dreams.

To grow a sailor's beard, don monkish garb,
Or trade in an agglutinative tongue
With a stone-age culture would be mollycoddling:
To go elsewhere is to withdraw from movement;
A side-step, a short one, will convey you thither.

Although its chaffinches, maybe, have learned
The dialect of another river-basin,
A fault transformed the local building stone,
It has a priest, a post-mistress, an usher,
Its children know they are not to beg from strangers.

Within its average elsewherishness
Your name is as a mirror answers, yourself
How you behave in shops, the tips you give:
It sides with neither, being outside both,
But welcomes both with healing disregard.

Nor, when you both return (you will, of course)
Where luck and instinct originally brought you,
Will it salute your reconciliation
With farewell rites or populate your absence
With reverent and irreverent anecdote.

No study of your public re-appearance
Will show, as judgment on a cure demands,
A sudden change in love, ideas or diet:
Your sojourn elsewhere will remain wordless
Hiatus in your voluble biography.

Fanatic scholarship at most may prove
That you resigned from a Committee, unearth
A letter from the Grand Duke to his cousin,
Remarking, among more important gossip,
That you seem less amusing than you were.

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Theodore Roethke

The Saginaw Song

In Saginaw, in Saginaw,
  The wind blows up your feet,
When the ladies' guild puts on a feed,
  There's beans on every plate,
And if you eat more than you should,
  Destruction is complete.

Out Hemlock Way there is a stream
  That some have called Swan Creek;
The turtles have bloodsucker sores,
  And mossy filthy feet;
The bottoms of migrating ducks
  Come off it much less neat.

In Saginaw, in Saginaw
  Bartenders think no ill;
But they've ways of indicating when
  You are not acting well:
They throw you through the front plate glass
  And then send you the bill.

The Morleys and the Burrows are
  The aristocracy;
A likely thing for they're no worse
  Than the likes of you or me,—
A picture window's one you can't
  Raise up when you would pee.

In Shaginaw, in Shaginaw
  I went to Shunday Shule;
The only thing I ever learned
  Was culled the Golden Rhule,—
But that's enough for any man
  What's not a proper fool.

I took the pledge cards on my bike;
  I helped out with the books;
The stingy members when they signed
  Made with their stingy looks,—
The largest contributions came
  From the town's biggest crooks.

In Saginaw, in Saginaw,
  There's never a household fart,
For if it ever did occur,
  It would blow the place apart,—
I met a woman who could break wind
  And she is my sweet-heart.

O, I'm the genius of the world,—
  Of that you can be shure,
But alas, alack, and me achin' back,
  I'm often a drunken boor;
But when I die—and that won't be soon—
  I'll sing with dear Tom Moore,
  With that lovely man, Tom Moore.

Coda:

My father never used a stick,
  He slapped me with his hand;
He was a Prussian through and through
  And knew how to command;
I ran behind him every day
  He walked our greenhouse land.

I saw a figure in a cloud,
  A child upon her breast,
And it was O, my mother O,
  And she was half-undressed.
All women, O, are beautiful
  When they are half-undressed.

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Herbert Read

Time and Being

Wait while I shut the gate
the wild wind is blowing
and over the eastern wold
the leaves of the trees and my tender thoughts
are toss'd to the angry sea.

We will walk over the fields till we reach
the bare top of the hill
where the world spins round like a gambler's wheel
and we and the sheep and the loose white stones
must dance on its whirling rim.

Beneath this black and tortur'd thorn
let us rest as we take our bearing
you and I in a universe
where nothing is unless we utter
and out of our words comes a Word.

Nothing existed and something is born
like a lamb on the cold green grass
our Word is bloody and hardly can stand
bedraggl'd in wind and bitten by thistle
a bleat of distress.

But it is ours this weanling cry
not a thought but a poem
it came out of the womb where nothing was
from the empty house of Being
in the time of another world

Where the rafters are rough and the floors are bare
where the walls are blank and no vent
gives out on the wold or the sea
and the only sound is the sound we make
the dole of our wondering lips.

The curtains of the night are golden
the curtains of the day are gray
We are cast for the trembling labour
the shudder of pain as we slit the veil
or die in the caul.

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Thom Gunn

Out of Breath

'I am out of breath because
I've been trying to match deep
sighs, groans, and gasps, when I was
really more inclined to sleep.

I doubt my fitness for such
intensity. Far better,
I think, to feel nothing much:
"nothing" is exact. Somewhere

in a badly lighted bar
I'll sit beside a drunk friend
staring through the open door
and play cards all the weekend.

An agreeable life, that.'
'*How will you live?*'—'The same dull
job will do. I'll work without
appearing to breathe at all.'

'*The dead are out of breath.*'—'Good!
I'll get mine back in secret
and breathe low. For how else could
I draw on a cigarette?'

Chester Kallman

Sailing North

Drop all wish to sing
The slow quickening
Of Apollonian spring.

Sea here also is blue
Though hardly that sea you
Not long ago knew.
You are seen differently.

All is oversung:
Floes launch roars
In some outlandish tongue;
Winter dies rashly.
Restraint serves the young.

Wines of this volcanic shore
Doze in the soil, so brief is
Their probability.
Like love? Well, it may be
You must learn to love yourself
At the close cunningly.

You will entertain
Certain poor weather;
Fresh courtesies will
Sprout with violence.
Can any love explain
Why gulls, glass-eyed, strain
Towards North Cape dumbly?

Can you, at hard mirrors
For whole months lit,
Keep sense enough not to go blind?
Even returning south
You will tote the reflection
Of more props left behind;
Lemming and lizard already
Scuttle paired when you mind.

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R. S. Thomas

The Mill

I am going back now
Twenty years at least:
Hardly his wife's place
In bed was cold than
He was there instead
And would not be moved.
It seemed hard at first:
Those who had waited
For years on the one
Now had the other
Lying log-heavy
And stiff in that room,
That smelled of death
Or mildew, or both.
They just carried on;
Washed him and changed him;
He was one more beast
To be fed and watered
On that hill farm
By the cloud wall.
Why did they do it?
Was the meagre price
Such bones can command
In death's market
Worth all their trouble?
Had a seed of love,
Left from the threshing,
Found a crack in their hearts?
I called of an evening;
Watched how the lamp
Explored the contours
Of his face's map.
On the wall his shadow
Grew stern as he talked
Of the old exploits
With the plough and scythe.
I read him the psalms;
Said prayers and was still.
In the long silence
I heard in the drawers
The mice that rustled;
In the shallow grate
The small fire's petals
Withered and fell.

Nine years in that bed
From season to season
The huge frame rotted,
While the past's slow stream,
Flowing through his head,
Kept the rusty mill
Of the mind turning.
It was I it ground.

Wole Soyinka

Season

Rust is ripeness
Rust, and the wilted corn-plume;
Pollen is mating-time when swallows
Weave a dance
Of feathered arrows
Thread corn-stalks in winged
Streaks of light. And, we loved to hear
Spliced phrases of the wind, to hear
Rasps in the field, where corn-leaves
Pierce like bamboo slivers.

Now, garnerers we
Awaiting rust on tassels, draw
Long shadows from the dusk, wreathe
The thatch in wood-smoke. Laden stalks
Ride the germ's decay—we await
The promise of the rust.

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The Generous Days

(*Aetat 18*)

His are the generous days that balance
Soul and body. Should he hear the trumpet
Behind the sun that sends its thinning ray
Penetrating to the marrow—
At once one with that cause, he'd throw
Himself across some high far parapet,
Body die to soul down the sheer way
Of consummation in the summons.

His also are the days when should he greet
Her who goes walking, looking for a brooch
Under broad leaves at dusk beside the path
—And sidelong looks at him as though she thought
His smile might hide the gleam she sought—
He would run up to her and each
Find the lost clasp hid in them both,
Soul live to body where they meet.

Body soul, soul body, seem one breath,
Or the twined shadows of the sun, his will,
In these his generous days, to prove
His own true nature only is to give.
Wholly to die, or wholly else to live!
Body to soul, and let the bright cause kill,
Or soul to body, let the blood make love.
Giving is death in life and life in death.

After, of course, will come a time not this
When he'll be taken, stripped, strapped to a wheel
That is a world, and has the power to change
The brooch's gold, the trumpet scarlet blaze
—The lightning in the bones those generous days—
Into what drives a system, like a fuel.
Then to himself he will seem loathed and strange
Have thoughts yet colder than the thing he is.

Stephen Spender

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NOTES & TOPICS

Miss Harriet Weaver

MISS HARRIET SHAW WEAVER, whose death at the age of eighty-five was announced in *The Times* of October 16th, was so modest and self-effacing a woman that her generous patronage of men of letters was hardly known beyond the circle of those who benefited by it. And of these persons, now that James Joyce and Wyndham Lewis are dead, there is no writer living who owes her as great a debt of gratitude as I do. On reading the announcement of her death, I immediately wrote a letter to *The Times*, which was not published. So I hope you will allow me the space to offer my tribute at somewhat greater length.

As proprietor of *The Egoist Press*, Miss Weaver was the first publisher of Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, of Wyndham Lewis's first novel *Tarr*, of poems by Miss Marianne Moore, and of my own first book of poems *Prufrock and Other Observations*. In these publishing ventures, she was guided by the counsel of Ezra Pound, himself the first champion and impresario of Joyce, Lewis, Marianne Moore, and myself. But Miss Weaver's support, once given, remained steadfast. Her great disappointment was her failure to persuade any printer in this country to take the risk of printing *Ulysses*; her subsequent generosity to James Joyce, and her solicitude for his welfare and that of his family, knew no bounds. I presume that she possessed ample means, but she lived very frugally: I imagine that her publishing usually showed a deficit; and the money that she devoted to the cause of literature must have amounted to a substantial part of her fortune.

Miss Weaver also published a fortnightly periodical, which began as *The New Freewoman*, but which in my time and to the end was called *The Egoist*. I succeeded Richard Aldington as assistant editor for the last year or two of its existence. Aldington had gone off to the war, and Pound nominated me to be his successor. As editor-in-chief, Miss Weaver limited her control to publishing instalments of a philosophical work by her friend Miss Dora Marsden. An instalment occupied the first half of each issue; and the assistant editor was allowed to fill up the remaining pages with whatever matter he liked or could obtain. I deeply regret my folly in throwing away my file copies many years ago, and I cannot now remember how I filled the pages at my disposal. Two or three of my own early essays appeared there, notably "Tradition and the Individual Talent"; and at least once I filled a column with Letters to the Editor—of my own composition, and under fictitious names. I also enjoyed the use of the office, a small room in some building in the Adelphi, occasionally visited, I believe, by a charwoman. It was all great fun, my first experience of editorship.

In 1932 I dedicated my *Selected Essays* to this good, kind, unassuming, courageous, and lovable woman, to whom I owe so much. What other publisher in 1917 (the *Hogarth Press* was not yet in existence) would, I wonder, have taken *Prufrock*?

T. S. Eliot

Our Universities

ONE OF THE most important facts about our universities is that so few people go to them. The number which they now admit is larger than it was before the war and the creation of new universities will increase it within the next decade, but even by the end of this period it will not exceed 200,000. This will still represent a smaller percentage than the number of those who are educated to this level in France, and a very much smaller percentage than the number, only a little short of 4,000,000, who are going this autumn to universities or university colleges in the United States.

The comparison with the United States is of particular interest because the difference in numbers reflects a radical difference in the conception of the nature and purposes of university education. In England, the main function of the universities has traditionally been to provide gentlemen of leisure with a tinge of learning and to prepare men and, more recently and to a lesser extent, women for the liberal professions. The first of these functions has lapsed with the change in the social climate and the virtual disappearance of gentlemen of leisure, but the second still remains dominant.

The emphasis has indeed shifted in various ways. The proportion of university graduates who go into the Church has very much diminished; the proportion of those who become teachers has increased; there is a continual increase in the number of those who engage in scientific research. For the higher reaches of

A. J. AYER, *author of* Language, Truth and Logic *and* The Problem of Knowledge, *is Professor of Philosophy at Oxford. He is at present teaching at City College in New York.*

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the Civil Service a university education is now *de rigueur*. But it is still far from being thought essential for a man of business or for a technician. Access to our universities is ceasing to be the prerogative of wealth, but we continue to reserve them for the formation of an intellectual and administrative élite.

As one might expect, the American outlook is much more democratic. What with us remains a privilege is coming by them to be regarded as a right.

For example, it is the official policy of the state of California that facilities for higher education should be provided for every young man and woman who has attained an academic standard which certainly need not exceed the ordinary level of our *G.C.E.* This is resulting in a fantastic increase in the number of those attending the state university and in the number and size of state and city colleges. A consequence which has to be admitted is that the scholastic level of many of these places is rather low. It is easy for us to ridicule a system which makes it possible to take courses in bookkeeping, or carpentry, or the technique of being a drum majorette.

But it is also easy to talk too glibly about a lowering of academic standards. If one judges the American system not by its abuses, which American educationists themselves condemn, but by its average product, then it is by no means clear that there is such an overall decay of standards as to offset the benefit of spreading some degree of learning over a very much wider field. In all American universities, the undergraduate curriculum is less specialised than in ours; at the time that he takes his first degree the American undergraduate is therefore likely to know less than his English counterpart about the subject of his major interest. But this deficiency is made good at the graduate level. It can hardly be maintained that those who are doing graduate work at Harvard or Princeton or the better colleges of the university of California are on the average any less capable or learned than the products of Oxford and Cambridge. The differences are at the bottom of the scale rather than at the top.

In general, I see no reason to believe that broadening the field of higher education would lead to a decline in the quality and number of those who graduate with first or second-class honours. On the contrary it is probable that at least their number would be increased. The lowering of standards would consist rather in the provision of some form of higher education for a much larger number of those who, by present criteria, are capable of achieving third-class honours at best. But would this be such a very bad thing? Surely the function of a university is not only to train specialists, but also to awaken an interest in ideas, to enable young men and women to develop some independence of judgment, even merely to give them some intellectual and social breathing space before they set out on the narrow roads of their careers. And these ends can be attained by a much wider class than that of the best candidates for honours. For those who are less academically gifted it might be suitable to introduce a more general form of education, on the American model. If it were practicable to extend the minimum period for the completion of an undergraduate course of study from three years to four, it might even be made a general rule that specialisation should not start until the second year. This idea has already been put into practice with some success at the University of North Staffordshire.

No doubt the Americans have gone too far and too fast in this direction. The mill itself deteriorates when too many people are put through it. But it is even more clear that we are not going far or fast enough.

The trouble is not that our academic requirements are too stringent; it ought to be possible, with a sound educational system, to triple our present university intake without relaxing the criteria which are satisfied by the weakest who are now admitted. The trouble is that our schools are not equipped to produce a sufficient number of candidates who reach even this unexacting standard. It is at the level of the primary schools that the problem must first be tackled. Without a radical reorganisation of our entire state school system, I fear that even the present modest programme for university expansion will be hard to fulfil.

A further obstacle to its fulfillment is that we have not yet succeeded in giving much prestige to a university education as such. Oxford and Cambridge do command prestige, but this is still more on social than on intellectual grounds; it does not extend to the red brick universities. Academically the gap can be diminished; most easily perhaps by giving money to these universities to enable them to build up strong departments in selected subjects. But the problem of the difference in social prestige will still remain, and it is not easy to see how it can be overcome. It has its roots too deeply in the English character.

Stendhal wrote of us in 1838 that "the entire life of the English consists in preoccupation with rank." Unhappily, this is one of the factors that is most resistant to social change.

A. J. Ayer

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Politicians and Scientists

By Edward Shils

PROFESSOR R. V. JONES in his recent contribution to the debate on "Scientists in Politics," recalled that,

> Sir Winston Churchill once remarked to me that Socrates had said that there could be good government only when kings were philosophers and philosophers were kings. Sir Winston regarded his wartime relations with scientists as achieving this end; his was the power and ours the philosophy.

Scientists are not ordinarily brought into the service of governments on grounds of their deep philosophical powers. Nor is it generally asserted that they should be brought in as counsellors to range freely over the whole field of policy, assessing men and motives and the whole landscape of alternative ends. The argument for their indispensability in modern government is rooted not in any conviction as to the breadth of their wisdom but in their expertise in a definite range of problems. They are prized not for their capacity to replace political judgment by scientific judgment, nor for their greater ease in comprehending a broad scene and to see the hidden interdependence of its parts. Their skill is generally thought to be a narrower one and their capacity for contributing to the process of decision more segmental and specific to their scientific competence. Even Sir Charles Snow who more than anyone else has argued for the greater assimilation of scientists into the highest public affairs and who rests his case not on the expertise of the scientist but on his belief that scientists have an outlook which is valuable beyond their specific scientific competence, builds his argument on an elaborate historical polemic against the late Lord Cherwell who roamed at will over subjects far from his own scientific experience.

The intimate relationship between king-politician and philosopher-scientist, between Sir Winston Churchill, when he was in and out of office, and Lord Cherwell, is an example of the "court politics" which Sir Charles so distrusts, of the unconfined scientific overlord of which *The Times* disapproves. It is a politics of personal trust and favour, a politics which skirts around official forms and takes no heed of the official distribution of powers or the "rules of the game" of committee or department. Yet if a scientific adviser to government is to have scope to express his breadth of outlook and his foresightfulness, he must be in a position in which decisions of broad range and long-lasting effects are made. Something like "court politics," carrying with it relatively easy access to the head of the government, are implied.

Sir Charles has unnecessarily simplified his analysis of the frightfully complicated problem of the right way to bring the talents of scientists into governmental service. In choosing the Tizard-Lindemann conflict, he has picked one personality to whom he ascribes a temperament obstinate, rude, and egocentric—which would have disrupted even the best organised system of committee politics such as is preferred by Sir Charles and *The Times*. Tizard, on the other hand, was an ideal committee manager. The whole matter has been further and still more unnecessarily muddled by the complexity of Lindemann's personality and the uneven diversity of his talents and experiences, which have permitted Sir Charles to depict them in such tones that he does not appear qualified even to play a reasonably competent part in court politics. These variegated qualities have certainly justified the mosaic of corrections of historical detail and biographical perspective adduced by Professor Jones, Sir Robert Watson-Watt and now most recently the Earl of Birkenhead.[1] The latter in particular by his effort to acknowledge the unworthy side of the Prof's character as well as to show his merits, has made the task of resolving the general issues even more demanding. If the Professor was always wrong in his judgment in scientific matters, or if he was mainly concerned to enjoy the pleasures of the companionship of the mighty and to throw his own weight around—as he appears to be from Sir Charles' portrait—then a clear condemnation of both the Prof and his scientific overlordship could have been rendered. The portrait which emerges from his new biography shows a man who although undoubtedly capable of arousing and feeling affection would have been a bully as a committee chairman. On Lindemann as a committee member, Lord Birkenhead's picture is subtler and juster than Sir Charles', but it is probably not too different in its implicit conclusions that he was a most inconvenient man to have about. He was inconvenient on a com-

[1] *The Prof in Two Worlds: The Official Life of Professor F. A. Lindemann, Viscount Cherwell.* By THE EARL OF BIRKENHEAD. Collins, 45s.

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mittee not because he was wrong and not only because he so often disagreed but because he disagreed so acrimoniously. Yet as a general counsellor and confidante, he was, as Lord Birkenhead inclines us to believe, probably invaluable. Through his influence on Sir Winston Churchill, both when he was in opposition and when he was Prime Minister, he contributed markedly to a greater sympathy with scientific work and a greater readiness to turn to it and to heed its recommendations. Irritated though many scientists might have been by Lindemann's scientific and personal quirks, they probably benefited by having at court a person who, even if he was not a personal friend, was a friend of science and of the more intimate assimilation of science and scientists into the process of decision. He was able to get a hearing for scientists when some other person, less endowed with scientific authority or less highly placed could not have done so. Moreover he was often capable of imaginative enterprises based on his scientific experience of which no one else had thought before.

THE QUESTIONS raised by Sir Charles and then left hanging have still not been settled by Lord Birkenhead or any of the immensely well-informed and circumspect participants in the events discussed and in their subsequent discussion. The first question concerns the special gifts of scientists which qualify them to be drawn into the consideration of high policy. The second is the question as to how the special qualities of scientists should be incorporated into the processes of decision.

Some observers think that scientists possess in the "scientific method" a canon of judgment which enables them to be more detached, more capable of envisaging alternatives, and more foresightful than the non-scientist. Sir Charles inclines towards this view.

There is no doubt that a good scientist does have the "future directedness," of which Sir Charles speaks, in his scientific work proper. It is a real question as to whether scientists, more than anyone else, are gifted with foresight beyond the sphere of their own scientific experience. Sir Charles seems to think this is so but his eulogy of Tizard provides no evidence of scientists exercising more than the foresight directed to possible scientific discoveries.

THIS SCIENTIFIC FORESIGHT IS, however, not the only quality which a scientist must have if he is to be not just a competent research worker but also an adviser to government. Scientific foresight is a foresight fertilised by his profound dwelling among the events he has been investigating for a long time. But a scientific adviser to government, whether as an overlord or as a committee member must often offer advice about something more than the probable scientific or technological outcome of a certain line of investigation or the probability of certain technological invention. He must go beyond that into other spheres with which he does not deal so deeply. He must make guesses about the outcomes of alternate ways of spending the funds available for research, he must make some estimates as to whether results more important for the larger enterprise might not be achieved if the existing scientific or technological—or military—resources are used in a different way.

This is a higher type of foresight. It is very likely that, at this point, Tizard was right as against Lindemann when he opposed the concentration of British bombing on German cities, not so much because he thought it would be militarily useless but because he thought it was not the best way to use scarce resources. Tizard thought that it would have been better to use more of the bombing resources for anti-submarine warfare. Lindemann was wrong here not only because his foresight about the physical consequences of the aerial bombardment of cities was incorrect but because this foresight was not broad enough to encompass the wider or strategic range of events. Despite Lindemann's failure to do so, outstanding scientists concerned with defence policy have shown an increasing aptitude to think in terms of combinations of strategic alternatives.

There is still a third type of foresight, characterised, not by its being, as Sir Charles would have it, more future-directed but by its still greater breadth, and by the quality of the objects towards which it is addressed. This is the foresight into the prospective forms of human action. Had Lindemann possessed this sort of foresight when he considered his bombing proposal, he would have foreseen more accurately the responses of German working men and their families to the destruction or damage of their homes. He would have rendered a more accurate judgment about the capacity of the German fire-fighting services, etc. to cope with the danger. From time to time, Sir Charles seems to suggest that scientists are more likely to possess this sort of foresight than the better government official or political leader or publicist or social scientist—all of whom presumably fall on the other side of the line which separates the future-directed culture of science from the existential, or even past-directed, culture of the humanities. On the contrary, it seems to me that scientists are as poorly endowed with this kind of foresight and understanding as anyone else.

Even if scientists are not any more realistically and detachedly foresightful about human affairs

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and the fate of societies than anyone else, there still would be very convincing reasons to have them sharing in the management of important decisions in which scientific and technological realities and potentialities are involved. If scientists are not especially gifted with this last type of foresight, should they not be confined to the order of facts in which they are scientifically experienced? Can their judgment be so segregated that they will not enter into the political sphere to render judgments on matters about which they have no more expertise than the next man or perhaps even a little less?

This segregation can perhaps be carried out on the administratively lowest levels of policy-making such as those which involve research on plant-breeding, bridge-building, fisheries, etc. This segregation can certainly be realised in the execution of research itself—although as we have seen in the case of the nuclear scientists in the United States, participation in the Manhattan Project generated an influential political outlook and movement of which Pugwash is only one of the many repercussions. It can scarcely be realised in the formation of any policy concerning research on matters bearing on national security.

The best that one can hope for is that the scientists at the highest level of policy—whether they are "overlords," "court" scientific advisers, or committee men—will try to be as circumspect in their judgments about the situations on which their scientific and technological schemes for research and developments will bear, as they are on the schemes themselves. Terribly serious problems of political prejudice and of attachment to one's own favourite scientific and technological ideas are intertwined there. They afflict the greatest scientists as much as they afflict lesser scientists, and the other lesser breeds, the politicians, publicists, and humanistic social scientists.

ALL THIS BEING so or at least having some chance of being so, what lessons are there for us in the "Tizard-Lindemann problem"? The first lesson is that the committee as a means of making scientific policy or any policy which involves sciences, guarantees nothing. A strong and artful personality in the chairmanship can have his way with a committee, probably more with a part-time committee than with a full-time committee. The committee system does seem to ensure the consideration of a diversity of views but it certainly does not guarantee that the consideration will be intellectually just or politically sagacious. On the other side, scientific advice through the politics of "the court," which Sir Charles sees exemplified in the iniquities which he attributes to Lindemann, are neither avoidable, nor as Lord Birkenhead, Professor Jones, and others have shown, pernicious.

Decisions have to be made at the peaks of the pyramid of power. They cannot all be made below the level of the courts and ultimately an individual, a Minister or the Prime Minister or the President must bear the responsibility. It would be ridiculous to expect a person in such a responsible position to eschew the possible advantages of one intimate adviser whom he trusts to speak with him freely and uninhibitedly, and without the restraints imposed by the boundaries of academic disciplines.

There are, of course, great dangers. The scientists who seek such posts or who are likely to enter into the career of which such posts are the culmination, might by the time they attain great influence have lost their contact with what is most living and growing in contemporary science. This danger is not much less at the lower levels of the committee chairman or of the scientific administrator and organiser.

The safeguards lie partly in the internal integrity of the scientific community itself—an integrity which embraces the younger scientists who are the vital centres of their subjects into a single network from which the older and most publicly eminent scientists have not broken their personal ties. This might maintain the fresh vigour of the purely scientific foresight of which Sir Charles rightly makes so much. It might also make scientists more reserved in their pressing of opinions on matters on which they have little experience or knowledge. It might fortify their modesty about the possession of that other, trans-scientific, foresight.

The proper employment of the specialised foresight of the scientist by the politician and administrator depends on the capacities of the latter as much as those of the former. The king must become something of a philosopher, but he must remain a king. The fusion of scientist and politician, at any level and in any form, offers no assurance of moral sensibility or of far-reaching prudence.

That other foresight, the wider and more human foresight, is as yet a gift given to very few. It might be, as far as we know, the fruit of experience and study. In so far as it is the fruit of experience, a few scientists, like the rarest and greatest politicians might acquire it in the course of time. In so far as it is the fruit of study, it will probably have to be the fruit, as yet untasted by practically anyone apart from geniuses like Lord Keynes and Max Weber, of that newer form of prudence, the slowly appearing and still unharvested third culture of the social sciences.

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The Drift of Things

Letter from New York — By IRVING KRISTOL

I CAN UNDERSTAND why most visiting Englishmen find *l'immobilisme Américain* positively exhilarating, as compared with *l'immobilisme Anglais*. Our version is so splendidly agitated. This country is just chock full of individual opportunities—it really is, even if the Chamber of Commerce says so. Men move around, from seaboard to seaboard and beyond, from university to university, university to government and politics, office work to business, business to journalism, journalism to finance—frustration we know, but not stagnation. It has been estimated that one-fifth of our factory workers have, at one time or another, owned a small business! Yet all this individual activity, this genuinely free enterprise, somehow manages to add up to a society whose prime characteristic at this moment is one of drift.

This quality of drift has been flagrantly displayed in the current hoop-la over fallout shelters. I am sure your press has told you all about this affair, to your incredulous amusement: the glossy advertisements for shelters with built-in cocktail lounges, the subtle jesuitical reflections on the morality of shooting your unsheltered neighbour who seeks admission, the pious commercials ("How Much is Your Family's Life Worth?") and the solemn official hypocrisy: it makes me sick to my American stomach even to mention these things. I don't know whether shelters ought to be built, or how they should be built, or where they should be built, or by whom—only the government has the information that could enable one to make a reasonable judgment, and only the government has the resources to translate this judgment into national policy. But the government is—well, it is, in the person of President Kennedy, busy selling subscriptions to *Life* magazine. That, at least, is how I interpret the President's letter in *Life*'s issue on fallout shelters, telling us "to read and seriously consider the contents of the magazine." (*N.B.*: to "seriously consider," not to believe.) Why should the President use this peculiar method of getting in touch with me on such an important issue? I don't know; President Kennedy is becoming more of a mystery every day. Last May, he announced the initiation of a long-range, nationwide programme to establish communal fallout shelters, properly constructed and supplied. Then in July he announced that he would soon let the American people know what each individual citizen could do "to protect his family." Now he is allowing his civil defence experts, under pressure from a handful of purblind Congressmen, and under the editorial supervision of Henry Luce, to revise the official manual on fallout shelters so as to minimise the damage a nuclear bombing would do. I can see that the President has a problem: he must persuade the Russians that he intends to resist aggression, with full force if necessary; and he can't make this persuasion effective if he simultaneously demoralises the American people with a graphic picture of what nuclear war would truly mean. Mr. Khrushchev simply tries to keep *his* people in ignorance; Mr. Kennedy does not have that option. But surely this dilemma could be resolved in some other way than by swaddling it in frivolity, hucksterism, and official double-talk.

THERE IS A WITTICISM going the rounds of Washington to the effect that President Kennedy ought to read a book called *Profiles in Courage*. I do not myself believe that his performance during his first year derives from any sudden timidity or failure of nerve. It is, rather, that the power of drift in American politics—the social inertia produced by so much individual activity, the paralysis of the general will produced by so much personal wilfulness, the anarchy of purpose produced by so much individual purposefulness—can be so overwhelming that any politician who merely keeps afloat has the illusion of accomplishing something. Certainly the many intelligent and vigorous men with whom the President has surrounded himself are anything but disillusioned. They are aggressively busy, working hard with an air of high-spirited dedication. Nor do they lack for things to do: in an organisation so huge and sprawling and complex as the U.S. government, there is an infinity of work for idle hands. Simply bringing a semblance of order into the chaos of the Pentagon could absorb the finest talents of this generation for the next five years. But this is not exactly what one has in mind when one talks of political leadership.

In foreign affairs, the absence of such leader-

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ship has been somewhat disguised by an unctuous stress on "patience," "responsibility," and "ultimate determination" to see things through. Thus, on Berlin, the keystone of American policy has become a stubborn insistence on our right of free access to that city —a right which Khrushchev, so far from challenging, has repeatedly affirmed. I do not know how, or why, this happened; I suppose some lawyer in the State Department drew up a memorandum that arrived on time, whereas the other memoranda were lost in the mail. Anyway, having taken a firm, principled, and uncompromising stand against a spectre, we were helpless before the reality of Soviet pressure against the real Berlin, which is a city inhabited by people and not merely a geographical focus for certain American rights of access. In retrospect, Western indifference to the amputation of August 13th was a disaster whose dimensions are only beginning to be appreciated. And what was Washington's first reaction to the Wall? For one full week, our government saw it only as a splendid occasion for propaganda, a juicy illustration of the fact that we are for Freedom while those mendacious Russians aren't: the *Voice of America* worked overtime, Ed Murrow was on all the front pages. Perhaps it simply did not occur to anyone that the Berliners might panic, or the West Germans become restive. More likely, it was instinctively felt that turning the issue over to the *Voice of America* was the kind of "action" that avoided unpleasant and distracting conflicts: with our Allies, with the neutrals, with Congress. And when everyone in the White House is so *busy* with the machinery of government (including, of course, the public relations machinery), one doesn't go out of one's way to look for trouble.

AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS out of office tend to be astigmatic; in office they become myopic. There is no one so short-sighted as an intellectual obsessed with the idea of practicality. Many conservative people in this country were more than a little alarmed at the thought of a horde of liberal professors clustering around the centre of national power. But their apprehensions were baseless. Not that the liberal professors have become conservative, are seduced by an Establishment (we don't have any), or are in any way "corrupted" by power. It's just that, barring a situation of national emergency, the sheer, routine exercise of this power, in such a country as America, absorbs all their attention and energy.

I'll give you an example. Some friends of mine feel that it's time a little movement got under way with the aim of popularising the idea of an "Atlantic Community"—that is, a common market of all the NATO nations and some common political institutions as well. These men are not utopian one-worlders; they don't foresee any single dramatic act of federation; but they do envisage some small, specific steps that could be initiated at this time. They have discussed this matter with various New Frontiersmen, and have always encountered the same reaction: a glazed and abstracted benevolence, quickly succeeded by an animated discourse on the chances of persuading Congress to pass a more flexible Reciprocal Trade Law this spring. Managing Congress, cajoling Congress, intimidating Congress, coming to terms with every single vested interest represented in Congress, somehow, anyhow, getting things through Congress—this is the dominating, the all-absorbing theme. To any suggestion that the President raise his sights a bit—that it might actually be easier to get a Reciprocal Trade Law through Congress if each Congressman knew his vote would affect, not merely bicycles or woollen shirts, but the destiny of the Western alliance—there is the rejoinder that public opinion must first be made favourably disposed. And if one doggedly points out that the greatest single influence on public opinion to-day is the President, in his words as much as in his actions, one is impatiently informed that the President's relations with Congress are in far too delicate an equilibrium to allow for such executive enterprise.

The Reciprocal Trade Act will probably pass, in a more or less emasculated form. I suspect it will, in the end, be much the same act that Richard Nixon or General Eisenhower would have got through. Feeling unable to rely on any groundswell of public opinion favourable to the Administration's policy as a whole; having, indeed, refrained from enunciating any general policy that could evoke such a groundswell; contenting itself with the instigation of *ad hoc* "citizen's committees" on behalf of each proposal (a typical Madison Avenue ploy)—the Administration now is condemned to an exhausting series of individual campaigns on each and every issue it wishes to raise. And when these campaigns end, as they must, with at most a compromised success, one is told that it is "laggard public opinion" that is to blame.

Another example: the Defence Department has just said that it will not, contrary to its previous intention, keep recalled reservists under arms for more than a one-year period. The reservists, it is explained, had been made too malcontent by the prospect. They, and their relatives, and their Congressmen think it exceedingly unfair that a relatively small group of men, who had either the patriotism or the folly to sign up in the reserves, should bear the

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entire brunt of military service. If a larger conventional military force is needed (and everyone agrees it is), what about all the other men who are available? Why not let *them* spend a year in service? Why, indeed, shouldn't *every* able-bodied man be in the reserve? It is hard to give a satisfactory answer to these questions —so hard that the Administration, rather than face the idea of universal, compulsory military service, has decided to reduce America's military strength at a moment when it can least afford it. The Administration is ostensibly bowing to "public opinion." But cannot one say, with equal justice, that it is dodging an opportunity to create "public opinion"?

IN THE MEANTIME, American sentiment, unmobilised and undirected, shows signs of turning actively sour. Left without guidance from its natural preceptor, the President, confused and frustrated by the inimical trend of world affairs, bewildered by the high-falutin' legalisms that befog all statements of American foreign policy, exasperated by the immense publicity given to such an obviously miniscule project as the Peace Corps, bored with the United Nations and its petty politicking—this public opinion is veering dangerously towards an odd kind of belligerent isolationism. The emergence of such organisations as the John Birch Society, the Minutemen, the Christian Crusade Against Communism, is a symptom of this political disorder. If the country's natural leader is not going to define the national purpose and direct the national energies, then there are plenty of unnatural and monstrous candidates for this mission. So far, they are still circulating around the crackpot fringe, more a nuisance than a danger. But unless something is done to transform the popular mood, they may yet have an influence utterly disproportionate to their present numerical strength.

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BOOKS & WRITERS

Ernest Hemingway

By Dwight Macdonald

HE WAS A BIG MAN with a bushy beard and everybody knew him. The tourists knew him and the bar-tenders knew him and the critics knew him too. He enjoyed being recognised by the tourists and he liked the bar-tenders but he never liked the critics very much. He thought they had his number. Some of them did. The hell with them. He smiled a lot and it should have been a good smile, he was so big and bearded and famous, but it was not a good smile. It was a smile that was uneasy around the edges as if he was not sure he deserved to be quite as famous as he was famous.

He liked being a celebrity and he liked celebrities. At first it was Sherwood Anderson and Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. He was an athletic young man from Oak Park, Illinois, who wanted to write and he made friends with them. He was always good at making friends with celebrities. They taught him about style. Especially Gertrude Stein. The short words, the declarative sentences, the repetition, the beautiful absence of subordinate clauses. He always worked close to the bull in his writing. In more senses than one, *señor*. It was a kind of inspired baby-talk when he was going good.* When he was not going good, it was just baby-talk.† Or so the critics said and the hell with them. Most of the tricks were good tricks and they worked fine for a while especially in the short stories. Ernest was fast and stylish in the hundred-yard dash but he didn't have the wind for the long stuff. Later on the tricks did not look so good. They were the same tricks but they were not fresh any more and nothing is worse than a trick that has gone stale. He knew this but he couldn't invent any new tricks. It was a great pity and one of the many things in life that you can't do anything about. Maybe that was why his smile was not a good smile.

After 1930, he just didn't have it any more. His legs began to go and his syntax became boring and the critics began to ask why he didn't put in a few subordinate clauses just to make it look good. But the bar-tenders still liked him and the tourists liked him too. He got more and more famous and the big picture magazines photographed him shooting a lion and catching a tuna and interviewing a Spanish Republican militiaman and fraternising with bullfighters and helping liberate Paris and always smiling bushily and his stuff got worse and worse. Mr. Hemingway the writer was run-

* "And what if she should die? She won't die. People don't die in childbirth nowadays. That was what all husbands thought. Yes, but what if she should die? She won't die. She's just having a bad time. The initial labour is usually protracted. She's only having a bad time. Afterwards we'd say what a bad time, and Catherine would say it wasn't really so bad. But what if she should die? She can't die. Yes, but what if she should die? She can't, I tell you. Don't be a fool. It's just a bad time. It's just nature giving her hell. It's only the first labour, which is almost always protracted. Yes, but what if she should die? She can't die. Why should she die? What reason is there for her to die? . . . But what if she should die? She won't. She's all right. But what if she should die? She can't die. But what if she should die? Hey, what about that? What if she should die?" *A Farewell to Arms* (pp. 245–6, Penguin ed.).

† I remember waking in the morning. Catherine was asleep and the sun was coming in through the window. The rain had stopped and I stepped out of bed and across the floor to the window. . . .

"How are you, darling?" she said. "Isn't it a lovely day?"

"How do you feel?"

"I feel very well. We had a lovely night."

"Do you want breakfast?'

She wanted breakfast. So did I and we had it in bed, the November sunlight coming in through the window, and the breakfast tray across my lap.

"Don't you want the paper? You always wanted the paper in the hospital."

"No," I said. "I don't want the paper now."

A Farewell to Arms (p. 193).

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ning out of gas but no one noticed it because Mr. Hemingway the celebrity was such good copy. It was all very American and in 1954 they gave him the Nobel Prize and it wasn't just American any more. The judges were impressed by "the style-forming mastery of the art of modern narration" he had shown in *The Old Man and the Sea*, which he had published in *Life* two years earlier. *Life* is the very biggest of the big picture magazines and *Life* is exactly where *The Old Man and the Sea* belonged. Literary prize judges are not always clever. This is something you know and if you don't know it you should know it. They gave him the prize and he went to Stockholm and the King of Sweden put the medal around his neck and they shook hands. Mr. Hemingway meet Mr. Bernadotte.

After 1930 his friends were not named Anderson or Pound or Stein. They were named Charles Ritz and Toots Shor and Leonard Lyons and Ava Gardner and Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper. He almost had a fight with Max Eastman because he thought Max Eastman had questioned his virility and he almost fought a duel with someone he thought might have insulted the honour of Ava Gardner but he didn't have the fight and he decided that Ava Gardner's honour had not been insulted after all. It is often difficult to tell about honour. It is something you feel in your *cojones*. Or somewhere. He liked Marlene Dietrich very much. They had good times together. He called her "The Kraut" and she called him "Papa." His wife called him "Papa" too. Many other people called him "Papa." He liked being called "Papa."

He wrote a novel called *Across the River and Into the Trees*. It was not a good novel. It was a bad novel. It was so bad that all the critics were against it. Even the ones who had liked everything else. The trouble with critics is that you can't depend on them in a tight place and this was a very tight place indeed. They scare easy because their brains are where their *cojones* should be and because they have no loyalty and because they have never stopped a charging lion with a Mannlicher double-action .34 or done any of the other important things. The hell with them. Jack Dempsey thought *Across the River* was OK. So did Joe Di Maggio. The Kraut thought it was terrific. So did Toots Shor. But it was not OK and he knew it and there was absolutely nothing he could do about it.

He was a big man and he was famous and he drank a great deal now and wrote very little. He lived in Havana and often went game fishing and *Life* photographed him doing it. Sometimes he went to Spain for the bullfights and he made friends with the famous bullfighters and wrote it up in three instalments for *Life*. He had good times with his friends and his admirers and his wife and the tourists and the bar-tenders and everybody talked and drank and laughed and was gay but it all went away when he was alone. It was bad when he was alone. Nothing helped then. He knew he had been very good once, he knew he had been as good as they come at the special kind of thing he was good at, and he knew he had not been good for a long time. He talked to interviewers: "I trained hard and I beat Mr. De Maupassant. I've fought two draws with Mr. Stendhal, but nobody is going to get me in any ring with Mr. Tolstoy unless I'm crazy or keep getting better." But he knew he was getting worse, and not better. He was a writer and his writing had gone soft a long time ago and he knew this no matter what the Nobel Prize judges and the editors of *Life* told him and he was a writer and nothing else interested him much. He took shock treatments for depression at the Mayo Clinic. He went twice and he stayed there a long time but they didn't work. He was overweight and his blood pressure was high and his doctor made him cut down on the eating and drinking. Last spring his friend Gary Cooper died. He took it hard. The position is outflanked the lion can't be stopped the sword won't go into the bull's neck the great fish is breaking the line and it is the fifteenth round and the champion looks bad.

Now it is that morning in the house in Ketchum, Idaho. He takes his favourite gun down from the rack. It is a 12-gauge double-barrelled shotgun and the stock is inlaid with silver. It is a very beautiful gun. He puts the end of the gun-barrel into his mouth and he pulls both triggers. There is nothing much left above the chin.

That week his great shaggy head looks down from the covers of the picture magazines on the news-stands and the graduate students smile thinly as they realise that a definitive study of the complete *œuvre* of Ernest Hemingway is now possible.

2

A PROFESSOR of English in North Carolina State College recently called Hemingway "essentially a philosophical writer." This seems to me a foolish statement even for a professor of literature. It is true that Hemingway originated a romantic attitude which was as seductive to a whole generation, and as widely imitated, as Byron's had been. (It is still attractive: Norman Mailer, for instance, is a belated

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Hemingway type, though his prose style is different.) But Hemingway was no more a philosopher than Byron was; in fact, he was considerably less of one. A feeling that loyalty and bravery are the cardinal virtues and that physical action is the basis of the good life—even when reinforced with the kind of nihilism most of us get over by the age of twenty—these don't add up to a philosophy. There is little evidence of thought in Hemingway's writing and much evidence of the reverse—the kind of indulgence in emotion and prejudice which the Nazis used to call "blood-thinking." For all the sureness of his instinct as a writer, he strikes one as not particularly intelligent. Byron wrote *Manfred* but he also wrote *Don Juan* and the letters and journals; underneath the romantic pose there was a tough, vigorous, and sceptical mind, a throwback to the 18th century and the Age of Reason. There were two Byrons but there was (alas) only one Hemingway. He was hopelessly sincere. His life, his writing, his public personality and his private thoughts were all of a piece. Unlike Byron, he believed his own propaganda. I hate to think what his letters and journals must be like. I suspect he kept no journals, since to do so implies reflection and self-awareness; also that one has a private life as apart from one's professional and public existence; I don't think Hemingway did—indeed I think it was this lack of private interests which caused him to kill himself when his professional career had lost its meaning.

We know what his conversation was like, in his later years at least, from Lillian Ross's minute account of two days spent with Hemingway and his entourage (*The New Yorker*, May 13th, 1950). The article presents a Hemingway who sounds as fatuous and self-consciously he-man as his general in *Across the River*. At least that is how it sounds to me. But Miss Ross has a different ear. She insists, and I believe her, that (a) she simply reported what Hemingway said and did, and (b) that she liked and respected him (and what he said and did). She also states that she showed advance proofs to Hemingway and that he made no objections to the article and in fact was pleased with it. One can only admire his objectivity and good nature. But perhaps his reaction was a little *too* objective. Perhaps it shows an alienation from himself that is neurotic—one should feel a certain amount of prejudice in favour of one's self, after all. Or perhaps, worse, it means that Hemingway by then had accepted the public personality that had been built up for him by the press—a well-trained lion, he jumped through all the hoops—and even gloried in the grotesque (but virile) philistine Miss Ross had

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innocently depicted. This latter possibility is suggested by a letter from Hemingway which Miss Ross quoted in *The New Republic* of August 7th last when she protested against Irving Howe's assumption that she had been out to "smear" Hemingway in her *New Yorker* piece. "The hell with them," Hemingway wrote her after the piece had been published, apropos of people who had found it "devastating" (as I must confess I still do). "Think one of the 'devastating' things was that I drink a little in it and that makes them think I am a rummy. But of course if they (the devastate people) drank what we drink in that piece they would die or something. Then (I should not say it) there is a lot of jealousy around and because I have fun a lot of the time and am not really spooky and so far always get up when they count over me some people are jealous. They can't understand you being a serious writer and not solemn." This seems to me, taken in conjunction with Miss Ross's reportage, to indicate the opposite to what the writer intended to indicate.

3

HEMINGWAY'S importance, I think, is almost entirely as a stylistic innovator. I have just re-read *A Farewell to Arms* and *Men Without Women* and what strikes me most is their extreme mannerism. I don't know which is the more surprising, after twenty years, the virtuosity of the style or its lack of emotional resonance to-day. Consider the opening paragraphs of *In Another Country*:

> In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains.
>
> We were all at the hospital every afternoon, and there were different ways of walking across the town through the dusk to the hospital. Two of the ways were alongside canals, but they were long. Always, though you crossed a bridge across a canal to enter the hospital. There was a choice of three bridges. On one of them a woman sold roasted chestnuts. It was warm, standing in front of the charcoal fire, and the chestnuts were warm afterwards in your pocket. The hospital was very old and very beautiful, and you entered through a gate on the other side. There were usually funerals starting from the courtyard. Beyond the old hospital were the new brick pavilions, and there we met every afternoon and were all very polite and interested in what was the matter, and sat in the machines that were to make so much difference.

This is a most peculiar way to begin a story. Nothing "happens" until the last sentence of the second paragraph. Up to then everything is simply atmosphere but not atmosphere as it was generally known before Hemingway, except for the wonderful two sentences about the game hanging outside the shops. It is an original mixture of the abstract and the concrete, as in the first sentence, and the effect is to describe not a particular state of mind but rather a particular way of looking at experience, one which makes as sharp a break with previous literary methods as Jackson Pollock made with previous ways of painting. The primitive syntax is the equivalent of Pollock's "drip and dribble" technique and, like it, is a declaration of war against the genteel and academic style. There is also a parallel with the architecture of Mies Van Der Rohe, whose "Less is more" applies to Hemingway's style, which gets its effect from what it leaves out. (Maybe this is the characteristic 20th-century manner in the arts: I'm told that in the music of Webern and the jazz of Thelonius Monk one should listen not to the notes but to the silences between them.) Because Van Der Rohe's buildings are simple in form and without ornamentation many people think they are functional, but in fact they are as aggressively unfunctional as the wildest baroque. The same goes for Hemingway's style which is direct and simple on the surface but is actually as complexly manneristic as the later James.

"Refinements in the use of subordinate clauses are a mark of maturity in style," writes Albert C. Baugh in *A History of the English Language*. "As the loose association of clauses (parataxis) gives way to more precise indications of logical relationship and subordination (hypotaxis), there is need for a greater variety of words effecting the union." Hemingway was a most paratactical writer. Not because he was primitive but because he was stylistically sophisticated to the point of decadence. Supremely uninterested in "precise indications of logical relationship," he needed very few words; his vocabulary must be one of the smallest in literary history.

I can see why, in the 'twenties, the two paragraphs quoted above were fresh and exciting, but in 1961 they seem as academically mannered as *Euphues* or *Marius the Epicurean*. This is, of course, partly because Hemingway's stylistic discoveries have become part of our natural way of writing, so that they are at once too familiar to cause any excitement and at the same time, in the extreme form in which Hemingway used

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them, they now sound merely affected. This kind of writing is lost unless it can create a mood in the reader, since it deliberately gives up all the resources of logic and reason. But I was, in 1961, conscious of the tricks—and impatient with them. *Why* must we be told about the two ways of walking to the hospital and the three bridges and the chestnut seller? The aim is probably to create tension by lingering over the prosaic—writers of detective stories, a highly artificial literary form, have learned much from Hemingway—just as the purpose of stating that it is warm in front of a fire and that newly roasted chestnuts feel warm in one's pocket is to suggest the coldness of Milan that fall. But these effects didn't "carry" with me, I just felt impatient.

4

A FAREWELL TO ARMS is generally considered Hemingway's best novel. It has aged and shrivelled from what I remembered. I found myself skipping yards and yards of this sort of thing:

> "We could walk or take a tram," Catherine said.
>
> "One will be along," I said. "They go by here."
>
> "Here comes one," she said.
>
> The driver stopped his horse and lowered the metal sign on his meter. The top of the carriage was up and there were drops of water on the driver's coat. His varnished hat was shining in the wet. We sat back in the seat and the top of the carriage made it dark.
>
> (Half a page omitted)
>
> At the hotel I asked Catherine to wait in the carriage while I went in and spoke to the manager. There were plenty of rooms. Then I went out to the carriage, paid the driver, and Catherine and I walked in together. The small boy in buttons carried the package. The manager bowed us towards the elevator. There was much red plush and brass. The manager went up in the elevator with us.

There is a great deal of paying cab drivers and finding it dark at night inside a closed carriage.

I found both the military part and the love-story tedious except at moments of ordeal or catastrophe. The wounding of the narrator, Lieutenant Henry, and his escape after Caporetto are exciting, and the chapters on the retreat from Caporetto are as good as I remembered, especially the four pages about the shooting of the officers by the battle police. As long as the lieutenant and Catherine Baker are making love and having "a good time" together, one is bored and sceptical. To my surprise, I found that Catherine was like the heroines of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *Across the River and Into the Trees*, not a person but an adolescent day-dream—utterly beautiful and utterly submissive and utterly in love with the dreamer: "You see I'm happy, darling, and we have a lovely time.... You are happy, aren't you? Is there anything I do you don't like? Can I do anything to please you? Would you like me to take down my hair? Do you want to play?" "Yes and come to bed." "All right. I'll go and see the patients first." The conversation of these lovers is even more protracted and boring than that of real lovers. (It is curious how verbose Hemingway's laconic style can become.) But at the end when Catherine dies in childbed, the feeling comes right and one is moved—just as the preceding ordeal of the escape to Switzerland by rowing all night is well done. This deathbed scene is one of the few successful ones in literary history; it is the stylistic antithesis to Dickens' Death of Little Nell (of which Oscar Wilde remarked, "One must have a heart of stone to read it without laughing").

The fact is Hemingway is a short-story writer and not a novelist. He has little understanding of the subject-matter of the novel: character, social setting, politics, money matters, human relations, all the prose of life. Only the climactic moments interest him, and of those only ordeal, suffering, and death. (Except for a lyrical feeling about hunting and fishing.) In a novel he gets lost, wandering around aimlessly in a circle as lost people are said to do, and the alive parts are really short stories, such as the lynching of the fascists and the blowing up of the bridge in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. In the short story he knows just where he is going and his style, which becomes tedious in a novel, achieves the intensity appropriate to the shorter form. The difference may be seen in comparing the dialogue in *A Farewell to Arms* with that in the little short story, "Hills like White Elephants." The former is often aimlessly repetitious because the writer sees nowhere to go (except at peak moments of crisis) but the latter is directed with superb craftsmanship to the single bitter point the story makes. Every line of this apparently random conversation between a man and a girl waiting at a Spanish railway station—she is going to Madrid for an abortion he wants but she doesn't—develops the theme and when towards the end she asks, "Would you do something for me now?" and he replies, "I'd do anything for you," and she says "Would you please please please please please please please stop talking?"—then one feels that tightening of the scalp that tells one an artist has made his point.

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5

"HEMINGWAY'S tragedy as an artist," Cyril Connolly writes in *Enemies of Promise*, "is that he has not had the versatility to run away fast enough from his imitators.... A Picasso would have done something different; Hemingway could only indulge in invective against his critics—and do it again." The list of Hemingwayesque writers includes James M. Cain, Erskine Caldwell, John O'Hara, and a whole school of detective fiction headed by Dashiel Hammett and Raymond Chandler. It also includes Hemingway. Connolly wrote before Hemingway had begun to parody himself in *The Old Man and the Sea*—which is simply his early short story, "The Undefeated," perhaps the best thing he ever did, re-told in terms of fishing instead of bullfighting and transposed from a spare, austere style into a slack, fake-biblical style which retains the mannerisms and omits the virtues—and above all in *Across the River and Into the Trees*, an unconscious self-parody of almost unbelievable fatuity. The peculiar difficulty American creative writers have in maturing has often been commented on. Emotionally, Hemingway was adolescent all his life; intellectually, he was a Philistine on principle. His one great talent was æsthetic—a feeling for style, in his writing and in his life, that was remarkably sure. But the limits of æstheticism unsupported by thought or feeling are severe. Hemingway made one big, original stylistic discovery—or rather he worked it out most consciously with the aid of Gertrude Stein—but when he had gotten everything there was to be gotten out of it (and a bit more) he was unable, as Connolly notes, to invent anything else. He was trapped in his style as a miner might be trapped underground; the oxygen is slowly used up without any new air coming in.

Hemingway's opposites are Stendhal and Tolstoy—interesting he should feel especially awed by them—who had no style at all, no effects. Stendhal wrote the way a police sergeant would write if police sergeants had imagination—a dry, matter-of-fact style. Tolstoy's writing is clear and colourless, interposing no barrier between the reader and the narrative, the kind of direct prose, businesslike and yet Olympian, that one imagines the Recording Angel uses for entries in *his* police blotter. There is no need for change or innovation with such styles, but the more striking and original a style is, obviously the greater such necessity. Protean innovators like Joyce and Picasso invent, exploit, and abandon dozens of styles; Hemingway had only one; it was not enough. But he did write some beautiful short stories while it was working. Perhaps they are enough.

thoughts after closing time?

It is some years now since Mr. Cyril Connolly announced that it was "closing-time in the gardens of the West". It is still anyone's guess how far this verdict will be proved correct—even it was a little premature. What has become clear to a great many thinking people lately, however, is that their best chance of understanding the way the world is going is by studying the lucid, factual and highly readable survey to be found every week in The Economist.

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POSTSCRIPT

WE HAVE AVOIDED editorial pronouncements, but the 100th number seems an ocasion on which we should try to explain what we consider ENCOUNTER's achievements and goals. ENCOUNTER has been more successful than we anticipated. We are printing 33,000 of the 100th number. When we started over eight years ago, we thought we would be doing well if we maintained a circulation of 10,000 readers.

What I want to do here is relate the kind of magazine we are to periodicals of ten and twenty years ago. I have in mind, particularly, *The Criterion* and *Horizon*.

What this will show, I think, is that, whether or not there has been (as Mr. Cyril Connolly, in his *Comment* in the 100th number of *Horizon* wrote), a decline in the arts, there has certainly been a shift in interest on the part of the public interested in reading periodicals from the purely literary and critical, to the conditioning circumstances in which writers, artists, and critics work.

In his *Comment*, Connolly wrote:

> During the eight years I have edited *Horizon* we have witnessed a continuous decline in the arts. Literature has been robbed of Joyce, Yeats, Virginia Woolf, Wells, Valéry, Freud, Frazer, to name but a few, and their places are not being filled.

Some readers might feel inclined to protest that if dying means decline, then the arts have always been going downhill. But the mere list of the contents of *The Dial*, vol. lxxiii, 5, for November, 1922, lends force to Mr. Connolly's remarks, made in the late 1940s. They include:

> T. S. Eliot *The Waste Land.*
> W. B. Yeats, *The Player Queen.*
> Arthur Schnitzler, *Doctor Graesler.*
> Sherwood Anderson, *Many Marriages.*
> Ezra Pound, *Paris Letter.*
> Illustrations by Picasso, Brancusi, Duncan Grant, Adolph Dehn.

Yet to-day, more than in other times, it is not possible to prove that there is a decline in the arts. Nor should one wish to do so. Art depends on miracles that solve problems which to analytic criticism would seem unsolvable. The great achievement of modern art has been —in painting and music, at all events—its miraculous resourcefulness. Picasso is incredible, and during the whole of his lifetime Van Gogh remained a critical impossibility.

It may be that there are Rimbauds disguised among the Beatniks, and a D. H. Lawrence just coming from a New Town. I very much hope so, and if that happens we hope that ENCOUNTER will be the first to publish him. But even a Rimbaud or a Lawrence wouldn't, for the time being at all events, produce the kind of atmosphere in which a magazine devoted purely to literature would be "news" in the way that *The Egoist*, *The Dial*, *transition*, etc., were news.

IT IS IMPORTANT that there should be magazines devoted purely to the arts and criticism. I doubt whether they can to-day have the kind of central position which *The Criterion*, *Horizon*, and other magazines I have mentioned had. This may not be due so much to the famous decline in the arts, as to the fact that in a time when the work of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf is dismissed as "experiment," and poetry is going through a phase of "consolidation," "correctitude," return to tradition, and "elegance" (to use the phrase employed by Miss Elisabeth Jennings in a British Council pamphlet recommending the English poets of the past ten years), literature, however admirable, is not news in the way that experimental writing—with its mixture of the sublime and the absurd—was a generation ago.

When I insist that a magazine must contain news, I do not mean this in the journalistic, but in the *Make It New* sense, of Ezra Pound's title for a volume of his essays. For a magazine to be news, readers have to look to it for work in progress that activates, experiments, influences, disturbs, ferments. The programme of Eugene Jolas in *transition* was "the revolution of the word": however silly this may have shown itself in some of the contents, it made one buy the magazine to find one's own bearings among transforming art, hoping (if one was young) it might change one's life.

I think that to-day the effects of certain conditioning circumstances in science, politics, and society, are news in the way that, a generation ago, Work in Progress was. They are so for various reasons. The most obvious of these is that our whole culture is threatened with total destruction. Almost as obviously, we are living in at least one scientific, and several social revolutions: revolutions in the class-structure, in education, in standards of living in our own

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country; revolutions in the relationship between peoples of different colour and race, which will ultimately affect our relations with one another and our view of our own culture.

In ENCOUNTER we have always been concerned with the conditions which affect the kind of culture we live in. What our wide angle view tries to take in is those circumstances in the surrounding world which are changing our values. It is, on the whole, their relevance to these changes which determines our interest in the tension between East and West, between the "advanced" and the "emerging" nations, the law and obscenity, the two cultures, the conflicts of ideas in the Labour Party, the divergence of critical standards in Anglo-American and French criticism, the impact of Asia and Africa on America and Europe, and a dozen other subjects we have touched on. We have had articles on prostitution, and we would like to have articles on many other seemingly marginal but ultimately important things influencing the conditions in which we create—for example, the effects on consciousness of new drugs. We are interested in these partly for themselves, but more still for the ways in which they will influence people's ideas about freedom, morals, education, and the tradition.

MATTHEW ARNOLD thought that in a time when values were in doubt, criticism might become more important than poetry. It seems that after a period of revaluation of the literary tradition, a young generation trained both in criticism and sociology, of whom Mr. Richard Hoggart and Mr. Raymond Williams are outstanding representatives, is occupied with exploring the roots of tradition not just in a selection of critically approved books, but in society itself. The interest their writings have aroused confirms, I think, my impression that we are living in a time when people are occupied with trying to form a picture of the forces of their world, to discover their place on a social and science chart. This will not be wasted if it is the search by young writers—like the new young English playwrights—for an alternative working-class tradition.

Politics is, of course, the most intrusive of the sets of circumstances conditioning sensibility today. It is a circumference that by now surrounds a divided world and penetrates into every centre. The power that it emanates is—for the time being at any rate—the radiations of the Cold War.

Politically our idea in ENCOUNTER has been to provide a platform for the greatest possible amount of disagreement within a broad area of agreement. We are agreed that in the present state of the world, democracy provides the basis for individual freedom that is denied under Communist and other dictatorships: and that therefore this freedom should be exercised, maintained, and defended.

Given agreement to disagree, this means that we have published a debate rather than an ENCOUNTER line. This has the disadvantage, of course, that readers sometimes imagine that an article represents ENCOUNTER, rather than the author's opinion. And since we are sponsored by The Congress for Cultural Freedom and have an American as well as an English editor, we are sometimes charged with representing only the American point of view. It seems to me that a fair-minded reader who looks back over our record for the past eight years, will not come to this conclusion. Broadly speaking, we are pro-American as we are pro-British—because we support democracy. But we are critical of many things in America, as in England.

We take sides, but I certainly agree with the remark of George Orwell in one of his letters published in this number: "I always disagree when people end by saying that we can only combat Communism, Fascism, or what-not, if we develop an equal fanaticism."

S. S.

The editorial and business offices of ENCOUNTER are at 25 Haymarket, London S.W.1. A stamped addressed envelope (English stamp) or international reply coupons should accompany MSS, otherwise they cannot be returned. For subscription details please see page 1.

ENCOUNTER is published by Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd., 7 John Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.1. for THE CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM, 104 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris 8, France. PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Denis de Rougemont. SECRETARY-GENERAL: Nicolas Nabokov.

The views expressed in the pages of ENCOUNTER *are to be attributed to the writers, not the sponsors*

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES

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WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

W. H. AUDEN

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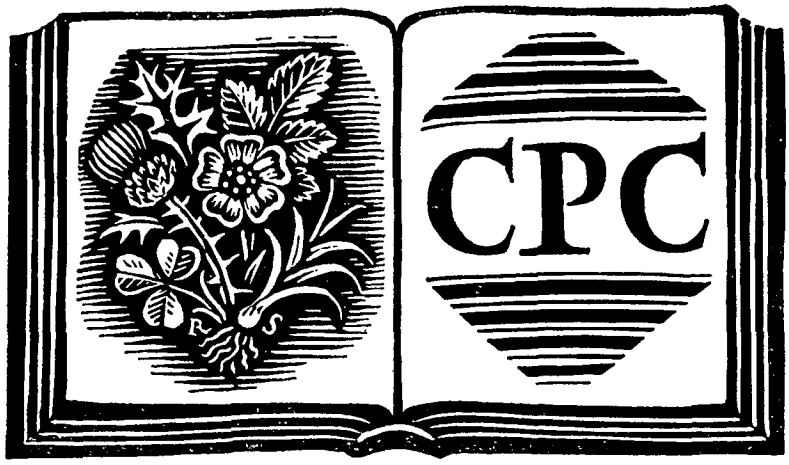

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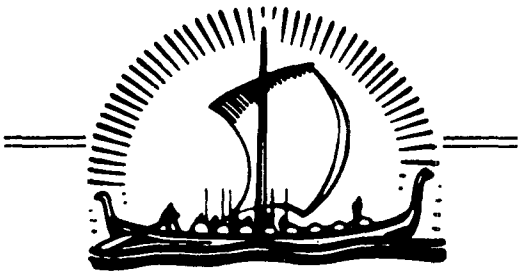

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A PERSONAL MESSAGE

Heartiest congratulations to *Encounter* on the publication of their one-hundredth issue. We aided them at the time of their birth pangs, and are pleased to have been associated with them throughout these eight years and to have witnessed their development into the highly successful magazine of today.

Early in the new year we shall be publishing books by such authors as :

Jacques Barzun, Hervé Bazin, Brigid Brophy, Hortense Calisher, Brian Glanville, Gunter Grass, John Knowles, Oscar Lewis, Frederic Morton, Katherine Anne Porter, Isaac Bashevis Singer and Italo Svevo, authors who will be of particular interest to *Encounter* readers. And it is through these books that we offer what is only the beginning of our continued support to *Encounter*, and our best wishes for even greater success and prosperity in the future.

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